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THE

WORKS

OF THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Late Fellow of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

VOLUME XVIII.

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A brief ACCOUNT of a

TRIAL

At the Assize held at *Glocester*, the 3d of *March*, 1743.

Extracted from Mr. WHITEFIELD's Letter.

To the READER.

ONE great reason of my publishing this extract is, to declare to all mankind, that I intirely concur in Mr. Whitefield's *judgment with regard to this whole affair. For I am convinced, that to prevent open violations of the law is a part of my duty both to* God *and the* king: *and that I am as much obliged to give information to the powers that be against rioters, as against highwaymen, traitors or murderers.*

JOHN WESLEY.

May 1, 1744.

THOUGH perhaps there is nothing in the world more abuſed than the law, and there are very few that go to law out of a proper principle; yet we hold that there is a proper uſe of it, and the law is good when uſed lawfully.——Whether or no we have uſed it lawfully in the preſent caſe, I ſhall leave my friend to judge, after I have told him the motives that induced us to engage in it. ——The *Methodiſts*, you know, are every where accounted enthuſiaſts, in the worſt ſenſe of the word; but though they are accounted ſuch, yet they would not be enthuſiaſts in reality.——Now we look upon it to be one ſpecies of enthuſiaſm, to expect to attain an end without making uſe of *proper means*.——We alſo think that believers ſhould be very careful not to be fond of ſuffering perſecution, when they may avoid it by making application to the higher powers.——We are likewiſe of opinion, that good Chriſtians will be good ſubjects, and conſequently it is their duty, as much as in them lies, to put a ſtop to every thing in a rightful way, that may prove deſtructive to the king or the government under which they live.—Chriſtian miniſters in particular, we think, ought to conſider the weakneſs of people's grace, and in pity to ſouls, do what they can to remove every thing

thing out of the way, that may discourage or prevent poor people's hearing the everlasting gospel.——These considerations for some time past, have led me to examine whether the *Methodists* in general (and I myself in particular) have acted the part of good subjects and judicious Christian ministers, in so long neglecting to make an application to the superior courts, and putting in execution the wholesome laws of the land, in order to prevent those many dreadful outrages which have been committed against us. —I need not descend to particulars.——Several of our brethen, both in *England* and *Wales*, have received much damage from time to time, and been frequently in great hazard of their lives.— *Wiltshire* has been very remarkable for mobbing and abusing the *Methodists*; and for about ten months last past it has also prevailed very much in *Glocestershire*, especially at *Hampton*, where Mr. *Adams* has a dwelling-house, and has been much blessed to many people. This displeased the grand enemy of souls, who stirred up many of the baser sort, privately encouraged by some of a higher rank, to come from time to time in great numbers, with a lowbell and horn to beset the house and beat and abuse the people.—About the beginning of *July* last their opposition seemed to rise to the highest. For several days they assembled in great bodies, broke the windows, and mobbed the people to such a degree, that many expected to be murdered, and hid them-

ſelves in holes and corners to avoid the rage of their adverſaries.—Once, when I was there, they continued from four in the afternoon till midnight rioting, giving loud huzzas, caſting dirt upon the hearers, and making proclamations, "That no anabaptiſts, preſbyterians, &c. ſhould preach there."—At another time they pulled one or two women down the ſtairs by the hair of their heads. And on the 10th of *July* they came to the number of near a hundred, in the uſual way, with a lowbell and horn, about five in the afternoon forced into Mr. *Adams*'s houſe, and demanded him down the ſtairs whereon he was preaching, took him out of his houſe, and threw him into a ſkin-pit full of noiſome things and ſtagnated water.—One of our friends, named *Williams*, aſking them, If they were not aſhamed to ſerve an innocent man ſo? They put him into the ſame pit twice, and afterwards beat him and dragged him along the kennel. Mr. *Adams* quietly returned home and betook himſelf to prayer, and exhorted the people to rejoice in ſuffering for the ſake of the goſpel. In about half an hour they came to the houſe again, dragged him down the ſtairs, and led him away a mile and a half to a place called *Bourn-brook*, and then threw him in. A ſtander-by, fearing he might be drowned, jumped in and pulled him out; whereupon another of the rioters immediately puſhed him into the pool a ſecond time, and cut his leg againſt a ſtone, ſo that he went lame

ſame for near a fortnight.——Both the conſtable and juſtices were applied to, but refuſed to act; and ſeemed rather to *countenance* the mobbing, hoping thereby *Methodiſm* (as they called it) would be put a ſtop to, at leaſt at *Hampton*. For a ſeaſon they gained their end.—There was no preaching for ſome time, the people fearing to aſſemble on account of the violence of the mob. —Upon my return to town I adviſed with my friends what to do.—We knew we wanted to exerciſe no revenge againſt the rioters, and yet we thought it wrong that the goſpel ſhould be ſtopped by ſuch perſons, when the government under which we lived countenanced no ſuch thing; and alſo, that it was abſurd to thank God for wholeſome laws if they were not to be made uſe of. We knew very well that an apoſtle had told us, that magiſtrates were ordained for the puniſhment of evil-doers; and that they bear not the ſword in vain.—We are alſo fearful if any of our brethren ſhould be murdered by future riotings (as in all probability they might) that we ſhould be acceſſary to their death if we neglected to tie up the rioters hands, which was all we deſired to do.—Beſides, we could not look upon this as allowed perſecution, ſince it was not countenanced by the laws of the land, and we might have redreſs from theſe rioters and inferior magiſtrates by appealing to *Cæſar*, whoſe real friends and loyal ſubjects we judged ourſelves not to be, if we ſuffered his laws to be publicly tram-

pled under foot by ſuch notorious villainy; and which, though begun againſt the *Methodiſts*, might terminate in open rebellion againſt king *George*.—For theſe reaſons we thought it our duty to move for an information in the *King's-Bench* againſt five of the ringleaders, and fixed upon the riot which they made on *Sunday*, *July* 10, when they put Mr. *Adams* and *Williams* into the ſkin pit and brook. But before this was done, I wrote a letter to one whom they called captain, deſiring him to inform his aſſociates, "That if they would acknowledge their fault, "pay for curing a boy's arm, which was broke "the night I was there, and mend the windows "of Mr. *Adams*'s houſe, we would readily paſs "all by; but if they perſiſted in their reſolution "to riot, we thought it our duty to prevent their "doing, and others receiving, further damage, "by moving for an information againſt them in "the *King's-Bench*." I alſo ſent a copy of this letter to a miniſter of the town, and to a juſtice of the peace, with a letter to each from myſelf: but all in vain. The rioters ſent me a moſt inſolent anſwer, wrote me word, "they were in *high* "*ſpirits*, and were reſolved there ſhould be no "more preaching at *Hampton*."—Finding them *irreclaimable*, we moved the next term for a rule of court in the *King's-Bench* to lodge an information againſt five of the ringleaders, for the outrage committed, violence offered, and damage done to Mr. *Adams* and *Williams*, on *Sunday*, *July*

July 10. The rioters were apprized of it, appeared by their council, and prayed the rule might be enlarged till next term.—It was granted. In the mean while they continued mobbing, broke into Mr. *Adams*'s houſe one *Saturday* night at eleven o'clock, when there was no preaching, made thoſe that were in bed get up, and ſearched the oven, cellar, and every corner of the houſe, to ſee whether they could find any *Methodiſts*. Some time after they threw a young man into a mud-pit three times ſucceſſively, and abuſed the people in a dreadful manner. The next term came on.—We proved our accuſations by twenty-ſix affidavits; and the defendants making no reply, the rule was made abſolute, and an information filed againſt them.—To this they pleaded NOT GUILTY; and according to the method in the crown-office, the cauſe was referred to the aſſize held at *Gloceſter*, *March* the 3d.——Thither I went, and on *Tueſday* morning laſt the trial came on. It was given out by ſome, "That the *Methodiſts* were to loſe the cauſe, "whether right or wrong." And I believe the defendants depended much on a ſuppoſition that the gentlemen and jury would be prejudiced againſt us. We were eaſy, knowing that our Saviour had the hearts of all in his hands. Being aware of the great conſequences of gaining or loſing this trial, both in reſpect to us and the nation, we kept a day of faſting and prayer through all the ſocieties both in *England* and

Wales. Our *Scotch* friends alſo joined with us, and chearfully committed our cauſe into his hands by whom kings reign and princes decree juſtice. We had about thirty witneſſes to prove the riot, and the facts laid down in the information.—Our council opened the cauſe (as I heard, being not preſent when the trial begun) with much ſolidity and ſound reaſoning:—They ſhewed, "That rioters were not to be reformers, "and that his majeſty had no where put the "reins of government into the hands of mob-"bers, or made them judge or jury."—One of them in particular, with great earneſtneſs, reminded the gentlemen on the jury of the advice of *Gamaliel*, a doctor of law, recorded *Acts* v. 38, 39. "Refrain from theſe men, and let them "alone; for if this counſel, or this work be of "men, it will come to nought: but if it be of "God ye cannot overthrow it, leſt haply ye be "found even to fight againſt God." Our witneſſes were then called.—I came into court when the ſecond witneſs was examining.—Mr. *Adams* and four more (three of which *were not called Methodiſts*) ſo clearly proved both the riot and the facts laid to the charge of the defendants, that the judge was of opinion there needed no other evidence.——The council for the defendants then roſe, and exerted a good deal of oratory, and I think ſaid all that could be ſaid, to make the beſt of a bad matter. One urged, "That we were enthuſiaſts, and our principles

"and

" and practices had such a tendency to infect and " hurt the people, that it was right in his opi- " nion, for any private person to stand up and " put a stop to us; and whoever did so was a " friend to his country."—He strove to influence the jury, by telling them, " That if a verdict was " given against the defendants, it would cost " them two hundred pounds:—That the defen- " dants rioting was not premeditated; but that " coming to hear Mr. *Adams*, and being offended " at his doctrine, a sudden quarrel arose, and " thereby the unhappy men were led into the " present fray, which he could have wished had " not happened; but however, it did not amount " to a *riot*, but only *an assault*."—Their other council informed the jury, " That they would " undertake to prove that the *Methodists* began " the tumult first." He was pleased also to mention me by name, and acquainted the court, " That Mr. *Whitefield* had been travelling from " common to common, making the people cry, " and then picking their pockets under pretence " of collecting money for the colony of *Georgia*; " and knowing that *Gloucestershire* was a populous " country, he at last came there.—That he had " now several curates, of which Mr. *Adams* was " one, who in his preaching had found fault with " the proceedings of the clergy, and said if the " people went to hear them they would be " damned."—He added, " That there had lately " been such mobbing in *Staffordshire*, that a

" regiment of foldiers was fent down to fuppreſs " them; inſinuating that the *Methodiſts* were the " authors.—That we had now another cauſe of " like nature depending in *Wiltſhire*, and that we " were not of that mild, pacific ſpirit, as we " would pretend to be."——This and much more to the ſame purpoſe, though foreign to the matter in hand, pleaſed many of the auditors, who expreſſed their ſatisfaction by frequent laughing.—The eyes of all were upon me.—Our Saviour kept me quite eaſy.—I thought of that verſe of *Horace*,

——*Hic murus aheneus eſto,*
Nil conſcire ſibi, nulla palleſcere culpa.

I looked upon myſelf as highly honoured in having ſuch things ſpoken againſt me falſly for Chriſt's name ſake. —— To prove what the defendant's council had inſinuated, they called up a young man, who was own brother to one of the defendants, and one of the mob. —He ſwore point blank, " That Mr. *Adams* ſaid, " if people went to church they would be damn- " ed; and if they would come to him he would " carry them to Jeſus Chriſt.—He ſwore alſo that " the pool in which Mr. *Adams* was thrown, was " no deeper than half way up his legs. He ſaid " firſt, that there was but about ten of them that " came to the houſe of Mr. *Adams*; and then he " ſwore that there were about threeſcore.—He " ſaid

" ſaid there was a lowbell, and that one of the " defendants did aſk Mr. *Adams* to come down " off the ſtairs, but that none of them went up to " him, upon which Mr. *Adams* willingly obeyed, " went with them briſkly along the ſtreet, and, " as he would have repreſented it, put himſelf " into the ſkin-pit and pool, and ſo came out " again." He ſaid alſo ſome other things, but through his whole evidence appeared ſo flagrantly falſe, that one council ſaid, " It was " enough to make his hair ſtand on end." The judge himſelf wiſhed, " He had had ſo " much religion as to fear an oath."——So he went down in diſgrace. Their ſecond evidence was an aged woman, mother to one of the defendants.——She ſwore, " That her ſon did " go up the ſtairs to Mr. *Adams*, and that Mr. " *Adams* tore her ſon's coat, and would have " broke his neck down ſtairs." But ſhe talked ſo *faſt*, and her evidence was ſo palpably *falſe*, that ſhe was ſent away in as much diſgrace as the other. Their third and laſt evidence was father to one that was in the mob, though not one of the defendants. The chief he had to ſay was, " That when Mr. " *Adams* was coming from the pool, one met " him, and ſaid, brother, how do you do? " Upon which he anſwered, that he had re- " ceived no damage, but had been in the pool " and came out again." So that all their evidences, however contrary to one another, yet

corroborated

corroborated ours, and proved the riot out of their own mouths. The book was then given to a juſtice of the peace, who had formerly taken up Mr. *Cennick* for preaching near *Stroud*, and had lately given many ſignal proofs that he was no friend to the *Methodiſts*.——But he intending to ſpeak only about their characters, and the council and judge looking upon that as quite impertinent to the matter in hand, he was not admitted as an evidence.——Upon this, his lordſhip, with great candor and impartiality, ſumed up the evidence, and told the jury, " That he thought they ſhould bring *all* " the defendants *in guilty*; for our evidences " had ſufficiently proved the whole of the " information, and alſo that the riot was pre- " meditated."——He ſaid, " That, in his opi- " nion, the chief of the defendant's evidence " was *incredible*; and, that ſuppoſing the *Me- " thodiſts* were *heterodox*, (as perhaps they " might be) it belonged to the eccleſiaſtical " government to call them to an account; " that they were ſubjects, and rioters were " not to be their reformers.——He alſo re- " minded them of the dreadful conſequences " of rioting at *any time*, much more at ſuch a " critical time as this; that rioting was the " fore-runner of, and might end in rebellion: " that it was felony, without benefit of clergy, " to pull down a *meeting-houſe*; and, for all " as he knew, it was *high-treaſon* to pull

" down.

" down even a bawdy-houſe.——That this " information came from the *King's-Bench*, " thath is majeſty's juſtices there thought " they had ſufficient reaſon to grant it; that " the matters contained in it had been evi- " dently proved before them, and conſequently " they ſhould bring in all the defendants *guilty*."

Upon this the jury were deſired to conſider of their verdict. There ſeemed to be ſome little demur amongſt them. His lordſhip perceiving it, informed them, " They had nothing " to do with the *damages*, (that was to be " referred to the *King's-Bench*) they were only " to conſider whether the defendants were " *guilty or not*." Whereupon, in a few minutes, they gave a verdict for the proſecutors, and brought in *all* the defendants *guilty of the whole information lodged againſt them*.—— I then retired to my lodgings, kneeled down, and gave God thanks.——Afterwards I went to the inn, prayed, and returned thanks with the witneſſes, exhorted them to behave with meekneſs and humility to their adverſaries, and after they had taken proper refreſhments ſent them home rejoicing.—The next morning I ſet out for *London*, from whence I take the firſt opportunity of ſending you this.——Let me entreat you to give thanks to the bleſſed Jeſus in our behalf, and to pray that his word may have free courſe, may run, and be glorified, and a ſtop be put to all ſuch rebellious proceedings.

MODERN

MODERN CHRISTIANITY:

EXEMPLIFIED AT

WEDNESBURY,

And other adjacent Places in

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Tua res agitur, paries quum proximus ardet.

1. I *John Eaton*, of *Wednesbury* in *Staffordshire*, heard the Rev. Mr. *Charles Wesley*, in the latter end of the year 1742, preach salvation by faith, in the *Colepit Field*. I and many others rejoiced to hear it, particularly many of the poor people at *Darlaston*, some of whom soon after began to meet together in the evenings, to sing, and pray, and read the bible.

Some

Some of *Wenſbury* uſed to go and meet with them; but one evening the mob at *Darlaſton* roſe, pelted them with clods and ſtones, and broke all the windows of the houſe where they had been.

On the 30th of *May* 1743, *John Adams* (whoſe houſe it was) fetched a warrant, to carry ſome of the rioters before juſtice *P.* of *Walſal*. He deſired ſome of us of *Wedneſbury* to go with him; ſo four or five of us went: but the mob at *Walſal* immediately roſe upon us: ſo that we were obliged to take ſhelter in a public houſe. Here we were kept cloſe priſoners till it was dark, ſeveral of us having been much hurt and abuſed. When it was night, we eſcaped one or two at a time. *Francis Ward* and I went laſt.

On the 21ſt of *June* 1743, a large mob came to my houſe at *Wedneſbury*. I was then conſtable, ſo I went to the door with my conſtable's ſtaff, and began reading the act of parliament againſt riots; but the ſtones flew ſo thick about my head, that I was forced to leave off reading and retire; ſo they broke about half my windows and went away: but ſome hours after, they came again, and broke all the reſt, and the door of my houſe, and the clock, to pieces. This is a ſhort account of the firſt damage that was done to me.

John Eaton.

2: On.

2. On the 30th of *May*, I *James Jones* went with *John Eaton*, and ſome others to *Walſal*. As we were going to and from the juſtice's houſe, the mob pelted us with dirt and ſtones. They raged more and more, till *Francis Ward* deſired the juſtice, who was preſent, to quiet them: but inſtead of that he ſwung his hat round his head twice, and cried, "Huzza!" On which encouragement, they grew ſo outrageous, that we were forced to take ſhelter in a public houſe, and to ſtay there till it was dark.

On the 21ſt of *June*, a great multitude gathered together in *Wenſbury* church-yard; among them was *Harvey Walklet of Wenſbury*, and *Richard Dorſet* of *Darlaſton*. *Harvey* ſaid to *Richard Dorſet*, "Methinks they are not ſo well armed as I would have them." *Richard* anſwered, "There are many pretty fellows from *Darlaſton*; I know them to be good blood." *Harvey* replied, "There is *John Baker* with the oak bough in his hat, he will break the firſt pane of Mr. *Eaton*'s windows." Accordingly they went to Mr. *Eaton*'s firſt, and from thence to other houſes. Here are above fourſcore houſes in and about *Wenſbury*, in many of which there are not three panes of of glaſs left.

Wedneſbury, June 29. *James Jones.*

3. *I Jonathan Jones*, in the county of *Stafford*, farmer, am willing to pay the king and

and country their due, might I be at peace, and go about my lawful occaſions, as I ought to do.

On the 20th of *June*, at my neighbour *Adam*'s houſe, two or three were ſinging a hymn, and a parcel of apprentices and others in a very rude manner, came and threw many ſtones thro' the windows; in particular Mr. *Richard Taylor*'s apprentice. So my neighbour *John Adams* goes to 'ſquire *P.* and brings a warrant for him; but Mr. *Taylor* goes to *Walſal*, to the juſtice, before the offenders were brought, and he was with 'ſquire *P.* when we came, who would not act at his own hall, but ſent us down into the town; where a great mob was waiting for our coming.

So the conſtable gave him the warrant, and he ſaid, "What! I underſtand you are *Methodiſts!* "I will not act for you." Then he went to the door, and told a great mob, "They might do what they would;" and took off his hat, and ſwung it about and went away. They gave a great ſhout, and ſome of them ſwore bitterly they would murder us all. We ſent for the conſtable, to help us out of the town; but he was not to be found. So we ſtaid in the houſe about two hours, till we thought the mob was gone; but as ſoon as we came out, ſome began to hollow, and the ſtreet was quickly full. They beat and bruiſed us very much: but thro' God's mercy we eſcaped with our lives.

About

About a week after, there arose a great mob at *Darlaston*, and broke me nine large windows, and many of my goods. The same day my man was coming home with my team, and they met him, and beat him, and much abused my horses. At night they came to break the rest of my goods; but I gave them money, and they went away.

So I was at *Richard Dorset*'s, our church-warden, and many of the mob came in and said, "Come now, d—n you, *Dorset*, we have done "our work, pay us our wages." And I saw the drink come in, in large jugs, and every one drank what he would.

What I have here said, I am ready to make oath of,

Jonathan Jones.

4. I *Francis Ward*, of *Wensbury*, went to *Walsal*, *May* 30, with *John Eaton*, to see if we could have justice done to the rioters, who had abused our neighbours at *Darlaston*. We went to *Benjamin Westley*'s, at the sign of the *George*, when one Mr. *Taylor*, curate of *Walsal*, came with the mob to the house, and, in our hearing, encouraged them to insult us. Accordingly they pelted us with dirt and stones, all the way we went to the justice's gate. The justice came out and said, "We must go down in the town, and then he would hear our complaint." But as we went, the mob continued to pelt us, though the justice

juſtice was with us. I deſired he would be pleaſed to read the act of parliament againſt riots; but he would not. When we came to *Benjamin Weſtley*'s, the juſtice would have had a hearing in the ſtreets, among the mob; but at laſt he was prevailed with to go into the houſe. Then he called for *John Adams*, or his wife, and, without hearing them ſpeak, ſaid, "What, you are *Methodiſts*," or words to that purpoſe, and immediately went out to the mob. We ſtaid in the houſe a conſiderable time, hoping, they would diſperſe; but, as ſoon as ever we came out, they gathered round us again, and beat and pelted us with whatever they could find. One of them came to me, and ſtruck me on the eye, and cut it ſo, that I expected to loſe my ſight. I got into a ſhop, and had my eye dreſſed, and then returned to my friends. The mob purſued me again, fetched me out of the houſe, and beat me very much; but with much difficulty I got from them again, and eſcaped a ſecond time into the houſe. They fetched me out again, and dragged me along the ſtreet, and through the kennel to and fro, till I had quite loſt my ſtrength, and was ſo weak, I was not able to get up. There came a poor woman and ſaid to the mob, "Will ye kill the man?" and lifted me up. With much ado I got home; but the abuſe I there received threw me into a fever.

5. About *Whitſuntide*, I *Joſhua Conſtable*, of *Darlaſton*, had all my windows broke by the mob,

mob, and many of my goods damaged or ſpoiled, and ſo had many of my neighbour's; in particular, *John Cotterell*, ſmith, *Thomas Butler*, *Thomas Wilkinſon*, *Aaron Longmore*, *William Powell*, *Anne Evans*, *Walter Carter*, *Samuel Foſter*, and *Thomas Wilks*, had their windows all broke.

Edward Martin, *Anne Low*, *John Fletcher*, *Edward Horton*, *Mumford Wilks*, *Joſ. Yardly*, and *Robert Deacon*, had all their windows broke twice.

James Foſter, nailer, *Sarah Hires*, widow, and *Jonathan Jones*, had their windows broke, and money extorted to ſave their houſes.

John Foſter, nailer, and *Joice Wood*, had their windows broke, and their goods broken and ſpoiled.

Joſ. Spittle, collier, had his windows broke, his houſe broke open, ſome goods taken, and ſome loſt.

William Woods, brick-maker, had his windows broke twice, and was compelled to go along with the rioters.

Elizabeth Lingham, a widow with five children, had her goods ſpoiled, her ſpinning-wheel (the ſupport of her family) broke, and her pariſh allowance reduced from 2s. 6d. to 1s. 6d. a week.

Valentine Amberſly, collier, had his windows broke twice, his wife, big with child, abuſed and beat with a club.

George Wynn had his windows and goods broke

broke, and to save his house was forced to give them drink.

Thomas Day had his windows and goods broke and was forced to remove from the town.

Jos. Stubs had his windows broke twice, and his wife so frighted that she miscarried.

6. On *June* 20, *John Baker*, *Thomas Griffiths*, and *Daniel Oniens*, at the head of a large mob, came to my house *Jonas Turner* by name, at *West Bramwick*, near *Wensbury*, and asked, "Whether I would keep from these men, and go to the church? I answered, I go to the church very often, but I never see any of you there." Presently *Daniel Oniens*, with a great club, broke great part of my windows at one blow. Others laid hold of me and said, "You "shall go along with us." I told them, "I "would not." They dragged me by force about 60 yards, and then I got loose from them. Afterwards they broke all my windows, and threw into my house three baskets full of stones to break my goods.

7. Some time in *June*, about four in the afternoon, a mob came to my house at *West-Bramwick*; I was within, and my two daughters without. They threw in stones and bricks so fast, that I thought I should have been knocked on the head. Whereupon I opened the door, and ran out amongst them. One of my daughters cried out, "My mother will be killed." On which they fell to throwing stones at her. She ran into a neigh-

a neighbour's houſe; but before ſhe could ſhut the door, they broke the bottom off with a brick end. They followed my other daughter with ſtones, and one with a great ſtake. She run into another houſe, much frighted, expecting to be murdered. I aſked them, "How they could come and abuſe us thus?" Upon which one came with a large club, and ſwore, "If I ſpoke another "word, he would knock me on the head, and "bury me in the ditch." Then he went to the window, and broke two or three panes of glaſs, which were all that were left. A woman then came with a club, and broke to pieces part of the tiling of the houſe.

Of this I am ready to make oath.

Mary Turner.

8. On the 10th of *June*, *James Yeoman*, of *Walſal*, ſaw me in my father's houſe at *Wenſbury*, and ſwore, "By G—you are there now; but we will break the windows, and kill you to-morrow." Accordingly, he came with a mob the next day: and after they had broke all the windows he took up a ſtone and ſaid, "Now, by G—I will kill you." He threw it, and ſtruck me on the ſide of the head. The blood guſhed out, and I dropped down immediately.

Mary Bird.

9. *June* 20. The mob came to the houſe of me *John Bird*, and demanded 5 s. of my wife,

or

or they would break all the windows. She offered them ſome money, which they ſnatched out of her hand, and then broke ten windows in front, the ſaſh-frames, ſhutters, caſes, cheſt of drawers, and hanging-preſs, and damaged the cieling, doors, dreſſer, and many other things.

John Bird.

10. On the 10th of *June*, the mob came to my houſe, *John Baker* by name, firſt. They threw in ſtones and bricks as faſt as they could throw them; ſo that we within were afraid of our lives. They broke all the windows I had in my houſe, and likewiſe the caſement and the cieling; and when there was no more damage for them to do, one of them cried out, "I "ſuppoſe now you will go to your dear Jeſus's "wounds, and ſee them opened for you."

John Turner.

11. *June* 20, 1743, one *Daliſton*, my neighbour at *Wenſbury*, after ſome words, took me by the throat, ſwore he would be the death of me, gave me a great ſwing, and threw me on the ground. As ſoon as I aroſe, *Equal Baker*, a collier gave me a blow on the eye, and knocked me down again. When I got up, he came after me to my houſe, and ſaid, "You dog, I will kill you." I went in, got a proper application to my eye, and lay down on the bed. In about half an hour, there came a large mob to

my houſe, and broke all the windows, except about twenty panes. The kitchen windows they cleared, lead, bars and all, and broke the window poſts, and threw them into the houſe. My ſhop was ſhut up; but they ſoon broke it open, broke all my pots and bottles, and deſtroyed almoſt all my medicines. They broke alſo the ſhelves and drawers in the ſhop to pieces, and many of my houſhold goods.

That day and the next, they broke the windows and goods, in more than fourſcore houſes.

Humphrey Hands.

12. In the latter end of *June* 1743, I *John Griffiths* of *Wenſbury*, with *Francis Ward*, went to Mr. *D.* juſtice of the peace. We told him what condition we and our neighbours were in, our houſes broken, and our goods ſpoiled. He replied, "I ſuppoſe you follow theſe parſons that come about." So he talked to us very roughly, refuſed us a warrant, and ſaid, "I will neither meddle nor make." And after he and ſome gentlewomen that were with him, had made as much game at us as they thought fit, we came away without any juſtice at all.

13. I *Mumford Wilks*, heard the Rev. Mr. *E.* ſay to the mob at *Darlaſton*, (after they had committed theſe outrages) "Well, my lads, he that has done it *out of pure zeal for the church*, I do not blame him. My lads, I hope you will let us *ſettle our affairs in our own pariſh ourſelves:* but

if

if theſe men ſhould come, and they ſhould follow them, then *your help will be needful.*"

14. *Line* and *Mare's Green* have been long noted for wickedneſs of every kind; for curſing and ſwearing, ſabbath-breaking, idleneſs, and all manner of debauchery. Few thereabouts uſed to go to church, or trouble themſelves about religion, till ſome of them heard Mr. *John* and *Charles Weſley*, who then had a deſire to flee from the wrath to come. In order to this, they ſet apart one evening in a week, to meet and encourage one another, by reading a chapter, ſinging a pſalm or hymn, and praying and converſing together.

The revellers, finding their old companions had forſaken them, were enraged at them more and more; inſomuch that they came one evening when they were met, in *November* 1743, and unroofed the ſhop that was aſide the houſe, and thruſt down the walls.

The next time we met, they came in more fury than before, threw great ſtones, broke the windows and looking-glaſs, and made the roof of the houſe to crack and ſink, and ſeemed every moment as if it would break in upon us; inſomuch that we were obliged to preſs out in the dark, in the midſt of a ſhower of ſtones.

We thought it would be beſt afterwards, to meet in the day, and accordingly we did. Immediately they blew a horn to gather their company together. When they had gathered fifty or ſixty, they

went from one houſe to another, threatening to kill thoſe who would not go along with them. They went together to a houſe, where were things of value, with a great ſhout, ſwearing they would plunder it. The woman of the houſe went out and aſked what they wanted? They did not make much reply; but part of them immediately went into the garden, and daſhed in pieces things which coſt ſeveral pounds.

We made complaint hereof to a juſtice, Mr. . *G.* He took a warrant to fill up, and aſked us, "What number there was in all? We told him, about ſixty." He then ſaid, "What, you are *Methodiſts!* Get about your buſineſs; you ſhall have no warrant; I am informed you are the vileſt men that live."

George Hadley,
Samuel Hadley.
Joſ. Moore.

15. Upon *January* 13, 1743-4, I *Jonathan Jones* of *Darlaſton*, about eight or nine at night, met in the ſtreet a great company of rioters, who told me, they were going to deſtroy the reſt of my goods, and pull my houſe down, as they had *Joſ. Conſtable*'s. So I aſked for *Thomas Tunks*, who was called the captian of the mob, and gave him many good words, and he took of me 2 *s.* 6 *d.* and ſome others I treated with ale; ſo they perſuaded the reſt to let me alone for that time.

The next day came *John Stokes* with a great club,

club, and wanted some money, or he said he would break my windows: but I put him away for the present with some drink. The same night, about six o'clock came *John Bagot* and *John Linyard*, with each a great club, and said, "You have given money to others, and we will have some too; or else we will call the rest of our company, and serve you as we have done your neighbours." So I gave them some money, and they went off about nine or ten o'clock. About six or eight with clubs and staffs came after, and *John Wilks* with a short gun: but my neighbours and I, with giving them some drink, persuaded them to go away.

It was some time before, just after the great mob had broken all our windows, that the Rev. Mr. ——, with others, met at *Thomas Forshew*'s, at the sign of the crown, and made a writing, and the mob was sent to bring as many as they had a mind to sign it, they declared whosoever, did not come and sign this, they would immediately pull his house down. It was to this effect: "That they would never read, or sing, or pray together again, nor hear Mr. *Wesley* preach."

16. In the month of *January*, I *Sarah Longmore*, late of *Darlaston*, was coming to *Wensbury*, with my brother and sister-in-law; and about thirty men stopped us in the fields, and asked, "Where we were going?" We said, "About our business." Without any more to do, they began to throw dirt and stones at us, and then

went before us, and ſtopped us at the ſtile. Seeing a gap in the hedge, we offered to go through there; but they would not let us. I was knocked down only once, but was bruiſed in many places.

Some time before this happened, the mob roſe at *Darlaſton*, to near a thouſand people. They took me by force out of my mother's houſe, gave me a club in my hand, and ſaid, "If I did not go with them, and pull down *Joſeph Spittle*'s houſe, they would murder me." *William Corfield* was the man who put the club in my hand, and hawled me along the ſtreet. I threw down the club, and when I came to the place, ſaw them break open the houſe, and bring out ſome of the goods, the people belonging to it being fled for their lives.

The ſame day the Rev. Mr. *E.* came to *Darlaſton*; and *Nicholas Winſpur*, the common crier of the town, gave notice, ringing his bell, that all the people belonging to the ſociety, muſt come to Mr. *Forſhew*'s houſe, and there ſet their hands to a paper, ſignifying, "That they would not hear theſe men any more: but if they did not come and ſet their hands, they muſt expect to have their houſes pulled down."

When I came, Mr. *Forſhew*, aſked me, "If I could write?" I ſaid, No. Then he bid me make my mark; ſo, through fear, I did. I then laid down a penny, which they made every one of us do, to make the mob drink.

17. About

17. About *Candlemas*, my wife was going to *Wenſbury*, and a mob met her in the road, and threw her down ſeveral times, and abuſed her ſadly.

(The manner is too horrible to write. The neareſt to a parallel caſe, is that of the woman abuſed by the men of *Gibeah*; although in this caſe are many circumſtances exceeding that.)

I got a warrant for ſome of them from juſtice *G.* As ſoon as this was known, the mob roſe and broke all my windows again. All who were ſerved with the warrant eſcaped, but one the conſtable took and brought before the juſtice, who came back and told his companions, "That the juſtice bid them go home about their buſineſs." So they went home and told the mob; and then they came to my houſe, broke ſome goods, and went away for a little time; but when they came again, they broke and deſtroyed all the neceſſary goods we had in the houſe. They likewiſe broke and ſpoiled all my ſhop tools; threw the tiles off the roof of the houſe, pulled down one room, the joiſt of which they carried away with them. Many things they took away; particularly all my gunlocks, both them that were filed, and them that were in the rough. They tore to pieces all my wife's linen, cut the bed and bedſtead, ſo that it was good for nothing; broke her box into little bits, and tore her bible and common-prayer book all to pieces. We retired to a friend's houſe; but one telling them we were there, they ſwore they would tear it down, if he

let us ſtay any longer. So we went out in the froſt and ſnow, not knowing where to lay our head.

18. *John Allen* of *Wenſbury*, in the county of *Stafford*, *John Darby*, of *Brerely*, in the ſaid county, and *James Conſtable* of *Wenſbury* aforeſaid, jointly and ſeverally make oath and ſay: and *firſt*, *John Allen*, for himſelf ſaith, that on *Monday*, the 6th day of this inſtant, *February*, being informed, that the mob would come the next day to plunder ſeveral of his friends and acquaintance, he went to the houſe of one *Francis Ward*, of *Wenſbury*, and aſſiſted in removing the goods and furniture: and that on *Tueſday* morning, (being *Shrove-Tueſday*) this deponent hearing the mob was come to the town, aſſiſted in removing divers other goods; and that afterwards, on the ſame day, he met about 300 perſons, aſſembled together in a riotous manner; and that preſently after, one *George Winſpur* of *Darlaſton*, and divers others, broke and entered the houſe of *Francis Ward*, broke down the fire-grate fixed therein, and then pulled down, took and carried away all ſuch goods as were left there, and which they were able to carry. After which one *John Baker* of *Wenſbury*, and a great number of other riotous perſons, came to the houſe of *Francis Ward*, and broke the windows; and then the ſaid *Baker*, with divers others, entered the ſame, and broke to pieces and deſtroyed the bedſteads and other goods and furniture.

The

The ſaid riotous company then went to another village, called *Weſt-Bramwick*, and returned back again to *Wenſbury*, where this deponent ſaw one *Tho. Horton*, of *Darlaſton*, with divers others, go in a riotous manner to the houſe of *John Griffiths* of *Wenſbury*, and ſaw *Thomas Horton*, with a ſledge hammer, break open the door of that houſe, which he, with others, entered, and deſtroyed and broke to pieces divers of the houſhold goods, and took and carried away the remainder, or the greateſt part thereof.

19. And the ſaid *John Darby* for himſelf ſaith, that on the 6th day of *February*, he heard a great many people making a noiſe: that he went thereupon into his own houſe, and locked and bolted the door: that in about a quarter of an hour, about ſeven-ſcore perſons came up to this deponent's houſe; nine or ten of whom bid him give them money, elſe they would break the door: that *John Hammerſley* of *Darlaſton*, and ſeveral others, with a great rail of wood, broke down the door, and entered the houſe, and caught up a large ax, and broke to pieces and deſtroyed this deponent's goods and windows. After which they deſtroyed five ſtalls of bees, and killed and took away all his hens, and threw the hay out of his barn; and carrying away what they thought proper: went to the houſe of *Samuel Smith*, a quarter of a mile further, and broke his windows. Thence they went in a riotous manner to *Bilſton*, and in the morning to *Wenſbury*.

20. *James Conſtable* ſaith, that on *Monday* the 6th inſtant, *Henry Old*, *Thomas Adams*, and *Francis Longmore*, all of *Darlaſton*, came to *Wenſbury*, and with oaths and curſes, in this deponent's hearing, proteſted, "That they would come the next day, and pull down the houſe of one *Benjamin Conſtable*, and have his heart and his liver out." That accordingly the next day, about ten in the morning, he heard a great huzza in the Town-ſtreet, and went to ſee what was the matter, when, he this deponent, was immediately, by one *Samuel Cotterel* of *Darlaſton*, and three others, ſeized by the collar, and forced to go into a great concourſe of people, (about 300 perſons) who had juſt broken into the houſe of one *John Bird*, and were throwing the goods of the ſaid *John Bird* out of the windows of his houſe: that thoſe who held this deponent then letting him go, and running to get their ſhare of the plunder, he went to the houſe of *Benjamin Conſtable*; and about two or three o'clock the ſame day, the ſaid riotous perſons came up to the houſe, which was locked and bolted; and as this deponent ſtood on the outſide, he ſaw *Thomas Horton*, with a large hammer ſtrike at the door, in order to break it open; which he not being able to do, *Joſeph Page* of *Darlaſton*, broke the window, and forced out the iron bars of the ſaid window, with a pike, and afterwards broke and entered the ſame, and unbolting the door, let the other rioters in: that *Thomas Tonks* of *Darlaſton*,

laſton, and divers others, with an ax, wrenched and forced open the door of *Benjamin Conſtable*'s warehouſe, riotouſly entered into the ſame, and broke to pieces and deſtroyed the goods therein, ſpilt the liquors therein placed, plundered and deſtroyed ſuch goods as they could not carry away, both houſhold goods and grocery goods, and alſo chandler's ware; that afterwards they went to this deponent's houſe, broke to pieces all the windows of his houſe, plundered the ſame from top to bottom, broke to pieces many of his goods, and carried a great part of them away: that thence they went to the houſe of *Daniel Conſtable*, broke open and plundered it in the like manner; and from thence to the houſe of *Thomas Atherley*, which they alſo damaged and plundered.

All three ſworn at *Serjeants Inn*, *London*, on *Feb.* 24, 1743, before *Wm. Chapple.* } *John Allen*, *John Darby*, *James Conſtable.*

21. *Monday*, *Feb* 6, we kept as a faſt. Sixty or more of us met at one, and joined in prayer. About eight we heard the mob was at *John Griffith's* the elder, breaking the houſe and ſpoiling his goods. This put ſome of us on removing our moſt portable goods. When I came home, my wife had awakened my youngeſt girls, and carried them to a neighbour's houſe. We then laid down and committed our own ſoul to God.

Next morning, *Feb.* 7. (*Shrove-Tuesday*) all Things were pretty ſtill till ten. We were all very chearful. The greateſt fear we had, was leſt we ſhould deny our Maſter. For they had got a paper, which if any one would ſubſcribe, his houſe was not to be plundered; but the far greater part, by the grace of God, choſe rather the loſs of all things.

About half an hour after ten, great numbers of men were gathered on the *Church-hill*. We could ſee them march down, ſome armed with ſwords, ſome with clubs, and ſome with axes. They firſt fell upon *Benjamin Watſon*'s houſe and broke many of the tiles, and all the windows. Next they came to Mr. *Addinbrook*'s, broke a fine clock, with many of his goods, and ſtole all the things they could carry away; among which were writings of importance, and papers relating to the land-tax. The next houſe was *Jane Smith*'s, whoſe windows they broke, with what little goods ſhe had. The next was Mr. *Bird*'s, where they deſtroyed every thing they found, except what they carried away, cutting the beds in pieces, as they did all the beds they could any where find. Thence they went to Mr. *Edge*'s houſe; he was ill of a fever; ſo, for a ſum of money, they paſt it over. The next houſe was mine: they were going by it; but one who uſed to be my familiar friend, called them back. They broke my counter, boxes and drawers, to chips, and all that ax or hammer could

could break, except my bedſteads. They ſpilt all my drugs and chymical medicines, and ſtole every thing they could carry, even all my wife's wearing apparel and mine, beſides what we had on.

Mr. *Eaton*'s houſe was next. They broke all his windows, and all his inſide doors in pieces, cut the lead off his houſe, deſtroyed or ſtole whatever they could lay their hands on. The gentlemen offered to ſtop them, if he would ſet his hand to the recantation paper. But he told them, "He had felt already what a wounded conſcience was: and, by the grace of God, he would wound his conſcience no more."

The next day they came with another mob, and ſaid, "If he did not ſign it, they would level his houſe to the ground." He told them, "They might do as they pleaſed; but he would not ſign it if they tore him bit from bit."

The mob on *Tueſday*, after they had done at Mr. *Eaton*'s, plundered ſeveral other houſes in *Wenſbury*, and ſeveral in *Weſt-Bramwich*. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the outrages they have committed. We keep meeting together morning and evening, are in great peace and love with each other, and in nothing terrified by our adverſaries. God grant we may endure to the end.

Feb. 26. *Humphrey Hands.*

22. On *Tueſday*, *Jan.* 31, 1743-4, *Henry Old*

Old came to *John Griffiths* ſenior's houſe, ſaying, "If they did not leave following *this way*, he had a hundred men at his command, who ſhould come and pull the houſe down." Soon after he brought ſeven or eight men with him, ſwearing what he would do, unleſs they gave him a guinea. She ſaid, "A guinea was not ſo ſoon ſhaken out of poor folks' ſleeves." Then he ſaid he would go and fetch the mob; but the neighbours gave him money and ſent him away for that time.

Monday, *Feb.* 6. Between ſeven and eight at night, came in part of the ſame company. Hearing them afar off, *John* and his wife faſtened the door and left the houſe. Some of the neighbours going in ſoon after, found them deſtroying all they could. Two chairs and ſeveral bundles of linen were laid upon the fire. They did not dare to touch them, but perſuaded the men all they could to go home. After they had deſtroyed what they could, they loaded themſelves with cloaths and meat, and went their way.

John Griffiths ſenr.

23. My father ſending me word that the mob had been at his houſe and broke many of his goods, and ſtole many, I removed as many as I could of mine before they plundered my houſe. And hearing they would force me to go with them, I ſent my wife and children before, and then followed them to her father's; but he did

not

not care to receive us. My wife wept; I was full of love, and not at all moved. At last their hearts relented, and they took us in. This indeed was the case with many of us. We were driven out of our own houses, and our friends did not dare to receive us into theirs. The reason for which my old companions have the greatest spite to me is, because I will not drink and game, and break the sabbath with them, as I used to do.

John Griffiths junr.

24. I *Edward Smith*, of *Wensbury*, standing by my own door on *Shrove-Tuesday*, there came a great mob, and broke into and plundered *Benjamin Constable*'s house; then they came to my house, and the foremost of them, *Thomas Horton*, with a great hammer broke open the door. I begged them to let me unlock the door, but he swore if I did not get away he would knock me down. At the same time, *Richard Adams*, with a large bar, broke the house window and got through. A great number of them followed both ways, and plundered the house, breaking some goods and stealing others, several neighbours endeavouring to save them, but to no purpose.

25. I *Edward Slater*, of *Wensbury*, was informed the night before, that the mob designed to plunder my house the next day. And between ten and eleven on *Tuesday*, standing in the

the fields, I saw them come down the town with clubs and other weapons, to Mr. *Eaton*'s house. Then the colliers, by themselves, swinging their clubs round their heads, gave a great shout and a jump together. Then they began breaking his windows; and those who first broke into the house and went up stairs, threw the goods out of the chamber windows, which *Henry Old* cut to pieces with an ax. I saw some come out with their pockets, and waistcoats, and breeches, loaded with goods. I went down the field towards my own house, got into a valley, read part of a chapter, and prayed for them. Then I got up, and saw the light through my own house, both doors and windows being knocked to pieces. After they had plundered some other houses, I saw them go up the street, laden with brass, pewter, and linen.

26. According to your request, I send you some account of what the mob did on *Shrove-Tuesday*. When I heard they were in town, and broke and stole all before them, I got out our beds and wearing apparel and hid them in the hedges, and went and stood aside of a hedge, about sixty yards off my own house.

When the mob came, they began with breaking the windows. They then broke and stole all they could lay hands on. They searched and found the beds and linen which I had hid, and took all they thought worth carrying away. I waded

waded through the brook to try if I could ſave ſome of my goods, which a man was pulling out of the ditch where I had hid them, his name was *David Garrington*. He told me, *It would be the ſame here as it was in* Ireland, for *there would be* a maſſacre *very quickly, and he wiſhed it was* now.

When they were gone, my wife and I, and two children came home. Our houſe was all laid open; for both the doors were gone, and all the windows, and the middle poſts were broke out. Being wet and very cold, we gathered up ſome of the chips, (for our goods were moſtly broke into chips, and ſtrewed about the rooms) and made a fire; but the wind blew the ſmoak ſo about, that we could not bear to ſit by it. We knew not what to do, till one of our neighbours ſent us word we might come to his houſe. But one went to *Walſal* the next day and told the landlord, who came and told them that received us, "They muſt turn out." And we expected there would not be an houſe to receive a *Methodiſt* in the whole country.

On *Aſh-Wedneſday* I was helping Mr. *Eaton* to remove ſome iron, which they had not found the day before, when Mr. *William Horton* came with a paper in his hand, and about a hundred perſons with him. He preſſed Mr. *Eaton* to ſign it, who refuſed. Then they laid hold of me, and ſwore I ſhould. I told them, I would not. They caught hold of my collar, ſhook me,

tore

tore my ſhirt and waiſtcoat, puſhed me from one to another, and aſked again, "Will you ſign the paper yet?" I told them, No. They then got a cord, put it about my neck, and ſwore they would hang me out of hand. Others cried out, "draw him through the brook." But one of them ſnatched away the cord, and ſaid, "If I would not ſet my hand, I might go about my buſineſs." They followed me, however, with many ſtones; but, by the providence of God, I was not hurt.

March 25, 1743-4. *John Turner.*

27. Having notice that the mob was coming, I *William Sitch*, of *Weſt-Bramwick*, and my wife (who had been delivered but a fortnight) thought it beſt to go out of the houſe, and leave it to them. My wife, with her young child, was forced to ſtay in the fields, none daring to take her into their houſe. At length one man did, but he was in a little time perſuaded to turn her out again.

The rioters plundered my houſe three ſeveral times, and did all the miſchief they could; but bleſſed be God, I could rejoice therein. He has ſaid, *As thy day, ſo thy ſtrength ſhall be.* And never did I find his promiſe fulfilled more than at that time.

William Sitch.

28. On *Shrove-Tueſday*, after two large mobs were

were paſt by, came four or five men to my next neighbour, *Jonas Turner*'s houſe. I and another woman followed them to ſee what they would do. They firſt broke the windows, then broke down the door, and went into the houſe. Soon after they were in they flung out a box at the chamber window, and ſwore if any touched it they would murder them. Soon after they flung out a bible, and one of them came out, and in great rage cut it into pieces with his ax.

Mary Turner, of *Weſt-Bramwick.*

* 29. They that came to my houſe firſt *(Thomas Parkes*, of *Weſt-Bramwick)* on *Tueſday*, *Feb.* 7, were five with great clubs, whom I met at the door. They demanded, "Whether I would deny hearing theſe parſons?" I told them, "No; for I believed they ſpoke the truth as it is in Jeſus, and if I were to deny them, I ſhould deny him that ſent them." They told me, "If I would not, they would plunder my houſe." I replied, "They muſt anſwer it at God's bar, and I would meet them there." I aſked, "Whether I had done them any harm?" They ſaid, "No; but they would have me keep to the church." I told them, "Some of you may know that I worſhip among the diſſenters; but I love a good man, let him go where he will; for there is but one church of Chriſt, and if you do not belong to that church, you had better never have been born."

* I told

* I told them, "God has allowed me liberty of conſcience, and ſo have the king and parliament, and I hope my neighbours will too; but if not, a day is coming, when the perſecuted and the perſecutor ſhall ſtand together; and if you wrong me now, God will right me then."

While I was ſpeaking I caught hold of their clubs, and the words ſeemed to have ſome influence on them: but by this time there was a great body of them gathered together; ſo they broke my windows, and then the door, and flocked into my houſe, and began to break my goods. But here the Lord ſuffered them not to go ſo far as they had done in other places; for they ſoon fell to plundering and loading themſelves with the things I had provided for myſelf, a wife, and ſeven children.

However, in a while I had prevailed with ſome of them to ſtop. But then they ſaid, "I muſt ſet my hand to this paper." I told them, "They were cloaked over with the name of proteſtants, but none but a *popiſh* ſpirit would tie mens conſciences." So I commended my cauſe to God, and withdrew from my houſe and them.

As I went along, one who thinks herſelf a Chriſtian ſaid, "Now I might ſee God was againſt me." I told her, "I did now feel that God was for me, and that he loved me nevertheleſs for this; for God loved *Job* on the dunghill with only a potſheard, as well as he did in all his plenty." I thought ſhe, in effect, bid me "curſe

" curſe God and die." May the Lord make her a Chriſtian indeed!

* When I returned to my houſe and ſaw it in ruins, I found nothing in my heart towards my perſecutors but love. Neither could I doubt of God's love to my ſoul. All that is within me bleſs his holy name!

* One day ſix or eight of the mob got me among them, and ſaid, " They were going to make a law, and we ſhould all ſet our hands to it." I told them, " I would ſubmit to the laws of God and my prince, but I could not to the laws of the devil." One of them ſwore, " He would break my windows again." I aſked him, " If ever he heard of Jeſus Chriſt doing ſo? And how he durſt, when he muſt anſwer it at his bar?" At which he ſtood ſilent.

30. On *Shrove-Tueſday*, about eleven o'clock, *Sarah*, the wife of *John Sheldon*, of *Weſt-Bramwick*, being told the mob was coming to her houſe, went and met them at the gate. Mr. *S*——, Mr. *J*——, and Mr. *S*—— *L*——, cornet, were at the head of them. She aſked *John Baker*, who was captain of the mob, What they were come for? He anſwered, " If ſhe would have nothing more to do with theſe people, not a pennyworth of her goods ſhould be hurt." She made no reply. Then they broke the door open, and began breaking and plundering the goods. One coming out with a fire-ſhovel, ſhe begged him, " not to take it away."

He

He ſwore, " if ſhe ſpoke another word he would beat her brains out."

After they had rifled the houſe they went to ſearch the barn. Some goods were hid there, which ſhe thought would now go with the reſt; ſo ſhe went and ſat contentedly down in the ruined houſe: but a man of their own, as bitter as the reſt till then, deſired they would not pull up the cow's ſtakes, ſo they looked no further; but ſeeing a calf, they beat and lamed it in ſuch a manner, that they were obliged to kill it.

* *John Sheldon* was this while helping *Thomas Parkes* to hide his goods, though he knew by the noiſe they were breaking his own in pieces. Between two and three he came to his houſe with *William Sitch*. *William* aſked *Sarah* how ſhe did? Saying, " For his part he took joyfully the ſpoiling of his goods." She anſwered, that " ſeeing ſo much wickedneſs ſhe could not rejoice, but ſhe bleſſed God ſhe could bear it patiently, and found not the leaſt anger in her." *John Sheldon* ſeeing the ſpoil they had made, ſmiled and ſaid, " Here is ſtrange work." His wife told him, " If ſhe had complied with their terms, not one pennyworth would have been hurt." He replied, " That if ſhe had complied to deny the truth, and he had found his goods whole on that account, he ſhould never have been eaſy as long as he lived; but he bleſſed God

God that ſhe had rather choſe to ſuffer wrong."

31. The mob continued to riſe for ſix days together. The damage they did in and about *Wedneſbury*, at the very loweſt computation, is as follows:

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
Benjamin Conſtable	103	0	0
Humphrey Hands	44	6	7
John Eaton	43	11	0
John Bird	43	0	0
Richard Bolton	40	0	0
Francis Ward	22	14	6
Godfrey Ward	22	6	4
John Turner	20	0	0
William Maſon	19	10	4
Thomas Parkes	14	0	0
John Sheldon	9	6	6
John Griffiths	3	15	8
Lydia Partridge	2	0	0
Joſeph Perry	1	10	0
John Darby	8	13	6
Jonas Turner	3	12	0
Richard Spittle	2	17	0
Joſeph Spittle	1	5	0
Edward Holdbury	4	10	0
Humphrey Hadley	13	11	0
John Griffiths	6	6	0
Benjamin Watſon	2	11	0
Thomas Smith	7	15	6

Edward

Edward Smith - -	2	5	0
William Sitch - -	5	6	0
Daniel Conſtable - -	2	13	5
Henry Addinbrook - -	15	14	4
Joſhua Conſtable - -	14	11	0
Joſeph Stubs *and* Robert Dakin	2	0	0
Jonathan Jones - -	3	0	0
William Small - -	4	12	7
Thomas Edwardly - -	5	0	0
Edward Slater - -	9	12	10
	504	17	1

32. I *Benjamin Conſtable* was induced to go to a juſtice of peace, on account of a warrant fetched by the wife of *Joſhua Conſtable*, for abuſe done to her as ſhe went over the field betwixt *Wenſbury* and *Darlaſton*. She ſwore againſt five men, before Mr. *G*. The warrant was executed upon one of them; but the juſtice would not act any thing againſt him, unleſs the other four were brought before him. The man returning home, raiſed a mob the ſame evening, went to the houſe of *Joſhua Conſtable*, pulled part of it down, and deſtroyed his goods. This I thought proper to acquaint the juſtice of.

A ſecond thing which induced me was, That on the laſt day of *January*, there came to my houſe *Henry Old*, *Francis Longmore*, and

and *Thomas Baylis*, and demanded money, " elſe they ſaid they would break my goods." But it being day-time, and their ſtrength ſmall, (though they had large clubs in their hands) I refuſed.

I ſent to the conſtable of *Darlaſton*, to know if he would execute his warrant on the other four. He ſent me word, " He durſt not do it for fear of having his houſe pulled down.'

I went on *February* 2, to Mr. *G*——, and gave him the above account; and withal told him, that on the *Tueſday* following, *February* 7, they threatened to riſe and pull down our houſes. He anſwered me in a rough manner, and aſked, " What I would have him to do? He could do no more than give out his warrant; and if the conſtable would not, or could not execute it, he could not help it." I deſired him, " That he would write a line to the officers of *Wenſbury* and *Darlaſton*, to exert themſelves for the diſcouraging any riſing on *Tueſday*." But he refuſed, and told me, " If we could not agree among one another, we muſt *go to the devil which way we would*."

33. *John Bird*, of *Wenſbury*, in the county of *Stafford*, carpenter, is ready to make oath, that he, together with *William Mumford* and *Mary Bird*, on the 10th day of this inſtant *April*, went to the houſe of *W*—— *G*——, Eſq;

juſtice of peace, in order to have a warrant for ſome of the principal rioters, who had lately done great damage to this deponent, and divers other perſons; but the ſaid juſtice refuſed to grant any warrant againſt them: that *William Mumford* then demanded a warrant againſt ſome of the ſaid rioters who had done damage to him; to which the ſaid juſtice ſaid, They were *Methodiſts*; and, after ſeveral other words, refuſed to grant it: that on the 13th inſtant this deponent, together with *William Mumford* and *Mary Bird*, went to the houſe of *J*—— *D*——, Eſq; a juſtice of the peace in the ſaid county, and requeſted the ſaid juſtice to grant him a warrant to take up ſome of the rioters, which the ſaid juſtice refuſed to do: that on the 17th inſtant this deponent, together with *Mary Bird*, went to the houſe of *W*—— *P*——, Eſq; a juſtice of the peace for the ſaid county, and requeſted a warrant to take up ſome of the rioters, to which the juſtice anſwered him roughly, That he ſhould have no warrant: and farther ſaid, That he and the reſt of the juſtices in the heighburhood had concluded and agreed to grant us no warrants. And this deponent further ſaith, That he himſelf hath ſuſtained damage by the rioters to the value of 50 *l.* and upwards: and that neither he, nor any other perſon who hath ſuſtained damage by them, are able

to

to bring the ſaid rioters to juſtice; becauſe not any of the above-mentioned juſtices of the peace will grant any warrant to apprehend them.

Such is the liberty of conſcience which Proteſtants grant one another! Does not He that is higher than the higheſt regard it?

THE CASE OF JOHN NELSON.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord *hath ſpoken, who can but propheſy?* Amos iii. 8.

MAY 4, 1744, at ſeven at night, when I had done my day's work, I went to *Adwalton*, and expounded at *John Booth's* to a well-behaved congregation. When I had done, *Joſeph Gibſon*,

Gibſon, the conſtable's deputy (an alehouſe-keeper, who found *his craft was in danger*) preſſed me for a ſoldier. I aſked him by whoſe order? He ſaid, "Several of the inhabitants of the town, who did not like ſo much preaching;" and by his own talk it appeared they were thoſe of his own craft.

He cauſed me to go to the *White-hart*, whither Mr. *Charleſworth*, and Mr. *Holmes* of *Sikehouſe*, and ſeveral more went with us; and Mr. *Charleſworth* offered 500 *l.* bail for me till the next day; but no bail was to be taken for a Methodiſt (ſo called.) He proteſted I ſhould go to his houſe. I made no reſiſtance, but went and ſeveral of our people with us; and we ſang an hymn, and prayed together, and ſo parted.

Next morning ſeveral people came to ſee me before we went from *Adwalton*. Here I was kept ten hours, before the warrant came into his houſe; and when the conſtable came, he ſaid, if he had been there he would have prevented what *Gibſon* had done.

Between eight and nine I went to *Birſtal*, to my houſe; and after I had changed my cloaths, we ſet out for *Halifax*, and I was brought before the commiſſioners, who ſmiled one at another as ſoon as they ſaw me. They bid the door-keepers not to let any man come in: but Mr. *Thomas Brooks*, had got in with me; and they ſaid, that is one of his converts. Then they called *John Gibſon*, and aſked, How many men

have you brought? He ſaid, one. Well, and what have you againſt him? Why, gentlemen, ſaid he, I have nothing to ſay againſt him, but *he preaches to the people*; and ſome of our townſmen do not like ſo much preaching. They broke out into laughter; and one of them *ſwore*, I was fit to go for a ſoldier, for there I might have preaching enough. I ſaid to him, Sir, you ought not to ſwear; *Well*, ſaid they to me, *You have no licence to preach, and you ſhall go for a ſoldier*; and to the captain, *Captain, is he fit for you?* Yes, he anſwered; *then take him away.*

But, I ſaid, here are ſeveral of my honeſt neighbours; you ought to give me the liberty of another man, and hear what they ſay of me, whether I am ſuch an one as the warrant mentions or no. They anſwered, *here is your miniſter* [one of the commiſſioners] *and he has told us of your character, and we will hear no more.* So I found I was condemned before the commiſſioners ſaw me.

Then Mr. *Brooks* laid the petitions before them, ſent by neighbouring gentlemen; which teſtified I had done no evil, but had behaved myſelf well in my neighbourhood, and had always maintained my family very well; and they deſired them to ſet me at liberty. And Mr. *Brooks* ſaid, "Gentlemen, you ſee he is not ſuch a man "as is mentioned in the warrant." But they bid him hold his peace, and ſaid, "You are one of "his pupils, and you ought to go with him."

He

He anſwered, " Why do you not ſend me then ; " for you have as much right to ſend me as " him ?"

" So, ſaid I, Gentlemen, I ſee there is nei- " ther law nor juſtice for a man that is called a " *Methodiſt* ; but all is lawful that is done againſt " me. I pray God forgive you, for you know not " what you do." They anſwered, *Surely your miniſter muſt be a better judge of you than any other man, and he has told us enough of you and your preaching.* " Well, ſaid I, Mr. *C*———, " what do you know of me that is evil ? Whom " have I defrauded ? Or where have I contracted " a debt that I cannot pay ?" He ſaid, *You have no viſible way of getting your living*, I anſwered, " I am as able to get my living with my hands, " as any man of my trade in *England* is, and you " *know it :* and had I not been at work yeſter- " day, and all the week before ?" But they bid the captain take me away ; and he came and ſaid, *We will take you off preaching ſoon.* I anſwered, " You muſt firſt aſk my Maſter leave." *But we will make you give over.* But, I replied, " It is " out of your power." Then he thruſt me into a corner of the room, and ſaid, I ſhould have com- pany preſently.

Afterwards ſeveral were brought to the com- miſſioners, and there condemned to go with me, and four or five acquitted. But all had their neighbours to ſpeak for them, except me; for what need was there of any other witneſs ?

Glory be to God on high! He kept my ſoul all this time in perfect peace, and I could ſay to him from my heart,

Whilſt thou, O God, art nigh,
My ſoul diſdains to fear;
Sin and Satan I defy,
Still impotently near:
Earth and hell their wars may wage,
Calm I mark their vain deſign,
Smile to ſee them idly rage
Againſt a child of thine.

Then the captain read the articles of war to us that were condemned, and ſaid, *You hear your doom is death if you diſobey us.* I anſwered, "I do not fear the man that can kill me, any more than I do him that can cut down a dogſtander. For I know my life is hid with Chriſt in God; and he will judge between me and you one day: but I beſeech him not to lay this ſin to your charge." And to Mr. *C*——, I ſaid, "Sir, I pray God forgive you; for you have given me ſuch a character as not another man in *England* will that knows me."

Then we were guarded to *Halifax* goal; (but the keeper would not let us come into his goal) then to the officer's quarters, and kept till ſix at night, where *John Rhodes*, and *Thomas Charleſworth*, of *Little Gummerſel*, came to ſee me, and cared for my ſoul, as if they had been my mother's

ther's ſons. O, my God, remember them for good, and give them and their houſes, and all that wiſh well to our *Sion*, to rejoice in the gladneſs of thy people!

At ſix we ſet out for *Bradford*, and many of the inhabitants of *Halifax* prayed for me, and wept to ſee me in the hands of unrighteous and cruel men. But I ſaid, "Fear not, God hath his way in the whirlwind; and he will plead my cauſe; only pray for me, that my faith fail not."

When we were about half way between *Halifax* and *Bradford*, one of the ſoldiers ſaid to me, "Sir, I am ſorry for you; for the captain is ordered to put you in the dungeon; but I will ſpeak to him, and if you will let me have the care of you, you ſhall lie with me; for the dungeon is a loathſome place as ever I ſaw:" I thanked him for his offer, but when we got to *Bradford*, we were driven up in the ſtreet where the croſs did ſtand: and the captain ſent and fetched the keeper of the dungeon, and ſaid, *Take this man and put him into the dungeon; and take this other along with you*—— (a poor harmleſs man, all the cloaths upon whoſe back were not worth one ſhilling; neither did they lay any thing to his charge, when he was ordered for a ſoldier.)

But when they came to the dungeon door, the ſoldier who ſpoke to me by the way, went to the captain and ſaid, Sir, if you will give me charge over Mr. *Nelſon*, my life for his, he

ſhall be forth-coming in the morning; but the captain threatened to break his head if he ſpoke about me any more.

* He came to us before I went down, and I aſked him, "Sir, what have I done, that I muſt go to the dungeon? If you are afraid of me that I ſhould run away, ſet a guard over me in a room, and I will pay them." He anſwered, *My order is, to put you in the dungeon.* So I ſee my Lord's word is fulfilled, *The ſervant is not above his Maſter.* For thoſe that were accuſed of thieving, and great evils which they had done in the neighbourhood, muſt eat and drink, and lie on feather-beds; but I only deſired a little water, and it was refuſed me by the captain, although I had nothing all day, except a little tea in the morning. But my maſter never ſends his ſervants a warfare at their own charge. He gives ſtrength according to our day. For when I came into the dungeon, that ſtunk worſe than an hogſtye or little-houſe, by reaſon of the blood and filth which ſinks from the butchers who kill over it, my ſoul was ſo filled with the love of God, that it was as a paradiſe to me.

Then could I cry out, O the glorious liberty of the children of God! And I fell down on my knees, and gave God thanks that he counted me worthy to be put in a dungeon for the truth's ſake; and prayed that my enemies might be ſaved from the wrath to come, I think with as much deſire as I could feel for my own mother's children.

children. I wiſhed they were as happy in their houſes as I was in the dungeon.

About ten, ſeveral of the people came to the dungeon door, and brought me ſome candles, and put me ſome meat and water in at the hole of the door. When I had eat and drank, I gave God thanks; we ſung hymns almoſt all night; they without, and I within.

* The ſame night, a man that lives in *Bradford* came to the dungeon: and though he was an enemy to the *Methodiſts*, ſo called, when he ſmelt the ill ſavour of the place, he ſaid, "humanity moves me," and went away directly: and about eleven, came again and ſaid, "I will aſſure you I am not in your way of thinking, but for all that, I have been with your captain, and offered ten pounds bail for you, and myſelf as a priſoner, if he would let you lie in a bed, but all in vain for I can get nothing of him but bad words. If the juſtice was in town, I would have gone to him, and would have ſoon fetched you out; but ſince it is as it is, I pray God plead your cauſe." O my God, let not him that would give a cup of cold water to thy ſervants loſe his reward; but do thou bleſs him, and bleſs thy people: and I beſeech thee to have mercy on our enemies, and let not thy heavy judgments fall upon them: but be thou glorified in their converſion, not in their deſtruction.

The poor man that was with me might have ſtarved, if my friends had not brought him meat: for when they had locked us up, they went to their lodgings, and took no more thought of us that night.

* When the man and I were laid down upon a little ſtinking ſtraw, " Pray you, Sir, (ſaid he) are all theſe your kinsfolk, that they love you ſo well ? I think they are the lovingeſt people that ever I ſaw in my life." I anſwered, by this you may know that they are Jeſus Chriſt's diſciples; for this is the mark he himſelf has given, whereby all men might know his diſciples from the unbelieving world.

At four in the morning, my wife and ſeveral more came to the dungeon, and ſpoke to me through the hole of the door; and I ſaid, *Jeremiah*'s lot is fallen upon me. Then it came to my remembrance, that when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old, I often thought if God would make me like *Jeremiah*, to ſtand and ſpeak his words to the people in the ſtreets, as he did, I ſhould not mind who caſt dirt at me. And now I am in ſome meaſure treated as he was, for perſuading men to flee from the wrath to come.

* My wife ſaid, " Fear not; the cauſe is God's for which you are here, and he will plead it himſelf. Therefore be not concerned about me and the children; for he that feeds the young ravens

ravens will be mindful of us. He will give you ſtrength for your day; and after we have ſuffered awhile, he will perfect that which is lacking in our ſouls, and then bring us where the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and where the weary are at reſt."

So ſaid they all that were with her at the door. I told them, "I cannot fear either man or devil, ſo long as I find the love of God as I do now; for he has cheared my heart as with ſweet wine ever ſince he ſuffered me to be caſt into priſon. O that I may be faithful unto death, and I ſhall receive the crown of life! For not one word of Jeſus ſhall fall to the ground till all be accompliſhed."

About five in the morning they took me out, and we were guarded to *Leeds*, and ſtood in the ſtreet till ten. Hundreds flocked to ſee me. Some ſaid, "It is a ſhame to ſend a man for a ſoldier for ſpeaking the truth; many of our neighbours that follow the *Methodiſts*, and were as wicked before as any people in the town, are now like new creatures; for we do not hear an ill word come out of their mouths." Others cried, "I wiſh they were all hanged out of the way, for they make people go mad: and one cannot get drunk nor ſwear, but every fool muſt correct us, as if we were to be taught by them. But I hope they will now be brought to nought, for that is one of the worſt of them.."

Juſt

Juſt as the church began, I was guarded to the goal, and the others ordered to the alehouſe. The goal-keeper here was very civil; for he let my friends come in feveral times to fee me. I thought of the *Pilgrim's Progreſs*; for hundreds of people in the ſtreets ſtood, and looked at me through the iron-grate, and were ready to fight about me. Several would have given bail for me, if they would let me out; but I was told that a hundred pounds was refuſed, which was offered by a ſtranger for me. I am too notorious a criminal to be allowed ſuch favours; for Chriſtianity is a crime which the world can never forgive.

At night, I believe an hundred of our friends were with me in goal together. We ſung an hymn, and prayed, and I gave an exhortation and ſo we parted. But Mr. *H.* was not willing I ſhould lie on ſtinking ſtraw, and ſent me a bed to lie on. I find the time is not yet come for me to be hated of all men for Chriſt's ſake. I pray God give me ſtrength in that day! Glory be to his holy name, hitherto his grace is ſufficient for me, and I hang upon his promiſe for ſtrength in my next trials.

At five on *Monday* morning I was let out of goal, and we marched off for *York* directly; many of our friends went with us out of the town near three miles, but when I came to take my leave, they mourned as one that had loſt his firſt-born. I ſpake comfortable words to them, and bade them

" ſtand

" ſtand faſt, in nothing terrified by your adverſaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of ſalvation, and that of God. So the peace of God be with you all."

* We came to *York* by three, and were brought before ſeveral of the officers at the *Black Swan* in *Coney-ſtreet*, who ſeemed to rejoice as men that had taken great ſpoil, and ſaluted me with many a grievous oath. It brought ſomething to my mind which I had ſpoken in the fields to the Lord, when he had broke a great cloud that was on my ſoul, through my refuſing to preach when many deſired me, and I had time, but conſulted with fleſh and blood. My ſoul was in great diſtreſs, ſo that I threw myſelf on the ground, and requeſted for death; ſeeing it more agreeable to fleſh and blood, to be a ſhepherd's dog then a preacher of the goſpel: for his hand is againſt every man, and every man's hand is againſt him. But at the remembrance of the prophets and apoſtles, and Chriſt himſelf, what contradiction and tribulation they all met with, the cloud broke, and my ſoul was ſo refreſhed with the love of God, that I cried out, " My Lord and my God! Now thou haſt given me ſtrength, forſake me not; and if thou ſend me to hell, to preach to devils, I am ready to go."

When I was before theſe officers, and heard ſuch horrid language, I thought hell could not be much worſe than the company I was in. I aſked them, Do you believe there is one God, and

and that he is a God of truth ? They ſaid, *We do.* I anſwered I cannot believe you, I tell you plainly. *Why ſo ?* I replied, I cannot think that any men of common underſtanding, who believes that God is true, dares take his name in vain; much leſs do you believe God can hear you when you pray him to *damn your ſouls.* Now ſuppoſe God ſhould grant you the damnation you pray for, what miſerable wretches would you be ? Do you know that you muſt one day appear before that God, who will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his name in vain ?

As I reaſoned with them about a future ſtate, they ſeemed to ſhrink as if I had thrown fire at them; but they ſoon put away the conviction, and ſaid, " You muſt not preach here, for you are delivered to us for a ſoldier; and muſt not talk ſo to us that are officers." I anſwered, there is but one way for you to prevent me. They ſaid, *What is that ?* I replied, " It is to ſwear no more in my hearing."

Then we were guarded through the city; but it was as if hell was moved from beneath to meet me at my coming. The ſtreets and windows were filled with people who ſhouted and huzzaed as if I had been one that had laid waſte the nation. But the Lord made my brow like braſs, ſo that I could look on them as graſshoppers, and paſs through the city as if there had been none in it, but God and me. O that I may never offend

my

my gracious God, or provoke him to take his loving-kindneſs from me ! Then, though I go through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil. Even now I find his word fulfilled, where he ſaid, I will deliver thee from ſudden fear, and from terror: for it ſhall not come near thee, verily thou art a God of truth ! O be merciful to this great city, whoſe ſtreets ring with curſes; and turn upon them a pure language, that their ſouls may be ſaved, and the enemy diſappointed of his hope !

I was brought to the guard-houſe, and the officers caſt lots for me, and it was captain *S*——'s lot to have me. Then they offered me money, but I refuſed to take it; and they bid the ſerjeant hand-cuff me and ſend me to priſon. I was guarded thither by a file of muſketteers, but not hand-cuffed, and kept two nights and part of three days ; during which time I was beſet with ſuch curſers and ſwearers as could hardly be matched out of hell. So I had work enough both day and night to reprove them. I found they could not ſtand my words, but the moſt hardened among them ſhrunk, and wiſhed they could leave it off, and never ſwear more.

Several of the town's people came and aſked me of the doctrine that the *Methodiſts* preached ; which make their names, ſaid they, to be loathed by all ſects and parties in the nation. My anſwer was, that ſame doctrine it is, which made

made *Jews* and *Gentiles* conſpire againſt Jeſus Chriſt who firſt preached it; and whoſoever he be that bears the ſame teſtimony, he muſt meet with the ſame treatment. Our Lord hath ſaid, *Ye ſhall be hated of all men for my ſake.* And again, *If they have perſecuted me, they will alſo perſecute you.* What! Do you think Chriſt would be found a liar, and all his apoſtles, who told us of the things that are done in this our day? Nay, verily, heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but not one word of Chriſt's ſhall fall to the ground.

When I had opened the ſcriptures, and told them the fundamental points of our doctrine, they ſaid one to another, This people is not what the world repreſents them; for if this is their doctrine, there is not a man in *England* can contradict them. They offered me ſtrong drink (but I told them I did not chuſe it) wiſhed me out of my enemies hands, and left me to my company of drunkards and ſwearers.

I may ſay I have fought with beaſts at *York*, for ſo theſe men live; yet my ſpeaking to them was not in vain, for they did bridle their tongues in my preſence after the firſt twenty-four hours. When they did ſpeak any blaſphemous word, if I did but turn and look them in the face, they looked like criminals before the magiſtrate.

On *Tueſday* night my wife and ſiſter *Mitchel* came to ſee me, and found me lying on the boards. I ſaid, Behold the fruits of the goſpel.

Now

Now you ſee the word of God is fulfilled, *They lay a ſnare for him that reproveth in the gate, and he that turned from evil maketh himſelf a prey.* But God looks down from heaven, and will plead our cauſe; fear not. No, they anſwered, we do not fear, for our God is as able to deliver now, as he was 1700 years ago. So they took their leave of me that night, and wiſhed me a good repoſe on my wooden bed; and thanks be to God, I ſlept as well as if I had been on a bed of down.

Next morning they brought me ſomething to eat, and bade me be ſtrong in the Lord, and not fear them that can kill the body only. My heart was rejoiced to ſee them ſo ſtedfaſt in the faith.

This day a court-martial was held, and I was guarded to it by a file of muſketteers, with their bayonets fixed to their pieces. When I came before the court, they aſked what is this man's crime? And the anſwer was, This is the *Methodiſt* preacher, and he refuſes to take money. Then they turned to me, and ſaid, "Sir, you need not find fault with us, for we muſt obey our orders, which are to make you act as a ſoldier; for as ſuch you are delivered to us, and if you have not juſtice done you we cannot help it."

My anſwer was, "I ſhall not fight, for I cannot bow my knee before the Lord to pray for a man, and get up and kill him when I have done:

done: for I know God both hears me ſpeak, and ſees me act; and I ſhould expect the portion of the hypocrite if my actions contradicted my prayers. Well, do not ſtand preaching to us, ſaid they, for we muſt make you obey us. Serjeant, give him ſome money; he offered me two ſhillings, but I refuſed to take it. They threatened me ſore, but I could not fear them at all. Well, ſaid they, if you run away, you are as liable to ſuffer as if you had taken our money. I anſwered, If I cannot be diſcharged lawfully, I ſhall not run away. If I do, puniſh me as you pleaſe. Then they ordered the ſerjeant to go to quarters with me. * He carried me to the *Wild Man* in *Peter-gate*, and the people behaved well to me, though they had eight more quartered upon them. They ſaid, It is a pity you ſhould come among ſuch a wicked crew as theſe we have. Surely there are but few like them in the world. They ordered me a room and bed to myſelf. Bleſſed be God, who give me favour in the ſight of the *Egyptians*, who have been ſo uſed by theſe of our own church. Theſe people were profeſſed *Papiſts*, who, I might imagine, would ſhew no more mercy to a man that preaches ſalvation by faith, than they would to a mad-dog. But I ſee it is not the name that makes a Chriſtian, but the mind that was in Chriſt; and whoſoever hath this mind in him, he is a Chriſtian, let the world call him what they will.

I came to *Margaret Townſhend*'s, and met with my

my wife and ſiſter *Mitchel*, who rejoiced to ſee my feet once more out of priſon. We ſang praiſes to God for his great mercies to me at this time, and paſſed the afternoon in encouraging each other. Next morning I ſet them out of town, and went, as I was ordered, to parade at the *Blue Boar* at *Caſtle-gate*. The officers ordered corporal *W*—— to fetch me a gun and other warlike inſtruments. He ſeemed to ſhudder at the taſk, but was forced to obey; and when he brought them, and came to gird them on me, he trembled as if he had had the palſy.

I aſked why they girt me with theſe warlike habiliments, for I am a man averſe to war, and ſhall not fight but under the Prince of peace, the Captain of my ſalvation; and the weapons he gives me are not carnal like theſe. Well, ſaid they, but you muſt bear theſe till you can get your diſcharge. As you put them on me, I anſwered, I will bear them as a croſs, and uſe them as far as I can, without defiling my conſcience, for that I will not do for any man on earth.

* The officers bade them march us off to *Heworth Moor*, to learn the exerciſe of a ſoldier; but corporal *W*—— ſeemed to be as tender of me as if he had been my own father, and carried the gun for me to the field. But when he came to teach me their exerciſe his heart ſeemed to fail him, and he bade me lay down the gun, and we fell into diſcourſe. I found he had the fear

of

of God before his eyes, and the Lord had ſhewed him the light of his countenance. But he was as a ſparrow alone on the houſe top; none cared for his converſation, but they all deſpiſed him, becauſe he would not get drunk and ſwear as they did. O my God, remember him for good always, I beſeech thee.

Next day I was ordered to the field, and others muſt teach me the warlike exerciſe; who all behaved civilly to me. I had more to ſee me than all the reſt, and it cauſed the truth to break out the more, and removed prejudice from many. I found the people of *York* looked upon one that is called a *Methodiſt*, as one that has the plague, and infects all he comes near; and they bleſſed God that none had come to preach there.

* But if I was bound, the word of God was not bound; for if any did blaſpheme, I reproved them, whether rich or poor, and fell into many diſputes with them; and God gave me words, ſuch as they could not reſiſt. My diſcourſe had ſuch an effect on them, that they ſaid, They wiſhed Mr. *Weſley* would come and preach there. I gave them ſeveral of our little books; ſo by hearing and reading they found out the doctrine to be only the plain word of God. And now ſeveral attended my coming to field, not to ſee me as before, but to aſk queſtions, and to know of the new doctrine (as ſome were pleaſed to call it.)

it.) Surely by all these things shall the gospel be spread. The Lord is in the tempest, and it shall turn to his glory; Satan doth but whet a knife to cut his own throat.

On *Sunday* the 13th I went to *Coney-street* church, and my Lord manifested himself to me in great love at the sacrament. At night, *Hannah Scolefield* and I and a brother from *Manchester*, with two or three more, went out into the fields, thinking to retire; but some had seen us, and told others that we were gone to sing hymns. We had been but a few minutes together before we had near an hundred to keep us company. We sung two hymns, and I gave them an exhortation. They received my words with meekness, and wished to hear me again.

We went about a mile another way, but there were people walking there also who knew me, and flocked to us and desired to hear what sort of doctrine it is we preach, which causes all men to hate us. I said, It is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which made all men hate him; and yet ye are sensible our great Shepherd said, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake.* But they said, This is a Christian land, and it is not so now. Well, said I, then you must say the gospel is not an everlasting gospel, or you declare us blest, and almost all the preachers in *England* curst. They said, What do ye point the blessings to you, and the curse to all the rest? We think it the other way. Then said I, you do

do not think as Chriſt ſpake; for he ſaid, *Bleſſed are ye when all men ſpeak evil of you, and hate you for my ſake and the goſpel's: rejoice and be exceeding glad, for ſo they did to the prophets of old. But woe unto you when all men ſpeak well of you; for ſo they ſpake of the falſe prophets.* Upon this they were ſilent, but wiſhed they could hear me themſelves, then they could judge better. By this time a great company was come together, deſiring to hear me, and God gave me to ſpeak plain, and to their hearts. When I had done, ſeveral of them ſaid, they would go ten miles to hear ſuch another diſcourſe. The prejudice ſeemed taken out of their minds at a ſtroke; and they cried, this is the doctrine which ought to be preached, let men ſay what they will againſt it.

The day following I went, as before, to exerciſe, and many came to talk with me, ſome to diſpute, and ſome who earneſtly deſired to be ſaved. Among the diſputers was a clergyman. I knew him; for I had ſeen him in his gown three days before. When ſeveral, who appeared as gentlemen, diſputed hotly againſt all the power of religion, I ſhewed them from the articles, and homilies, and prayers of our own church, that thoſe who ſpoke as they did, were no members of the church of *England*.

When they were put to ſilence, the miniſter began to explain the Spirit of God out of the world; as what could not be felt or perceived at all, neither was it neceſſary, now we had the ſcriptures

ſcriptures to go by. I ſaid, it is highly neceſſary, if the ſcriptures be true: for they tell me, if I have not the Spirit of Chriſt, I am not his, I muſt belong to the devil; for they two ſhare the world between them.

I had ſome every day to diſpute with me; and every night ſome to converſe with me, who wanted to know the way to *Zion*. The people now cry out, when will Mr. *Weſley* come, for here are thouſands in this town would gladly hear him. Indeed I find a great deſire in them to know the way of ſalvation; nay, and they ſeem willing to be ſaved God's own way; that is, *from* their ſins, not in them. Surely the Lord will be mindful of them, and give them teachers after his own heart.

The ſecond *Sunday* I went to church, and my heart was comforted again by the love of God in the ſacrament. God, I find, will meet with us in his own ways, O may we never forſake them!

* The people attended my going to the field all this week: and when I went along the ſtreets, they came out of their houſes to ſtare at me, as if I had been a monſter. I have read that they would not ſuffer them to buy or ſell in the city, unleſs they had the mark of the beaſt; but here, without his mark we cannot ſo much as paſs the ſtreets. O my God, why is thy ſervant as a ſpeckled bird in this which is called a Chriſtian country? *Called* after thy moſt ſacred name; which whoſoever names ſhould depart from ini-

quity. How is the faithful city become an harlot, and thy people taken captive by the enemy at his will. It is time for thee, Lord to lay to thy hand, for they have deſtroyed thy law.

One day this week, after my exerciſe on the moor, there came a gentleman in gold lace, and a miniſter in diſguiſe, and began aſking me queſtions; which I anſwered according to the ability God gave me; many flocked round about us to hear, for our diſpute was long, and not on their ſide. I believe we had talked half an hour before I perceived he was a miniſter; for I took him for a lawyer, and ſuch a one as believed there was no God: for when I ſpoke of the ſcriptures, he threw up his head and called me fool, and bad me hold my nonſenſe. I ſaid, that which you call nonſenſe, I call the higheſt wiſdom. When I ſpake any thing of the Spirit of God, he heaved his cane at me, as if he would have ſtruck me: but God gave me perfect peace in my ſoul, and words that made him ſtart, and convinced the by-ſtanders of the truth. He was ſo enraged that he foamed at the mouth like a horſe that is hard rid. But when I underſtood that he was a miniſter, I ſaid, Hold, Sir, let me ſpeak a little by your leave. You call yourſelf a miniſter of the church of *England*, do you not? I *do*. Pray then, Sir, what doctrine do you preach? For you make the word of God of none effect, and you deny all inſpiration. *So I do deny all inſpiration*. How dare you then pray for the inſpiration

ſpiration of God's Spirit, when you do not believe there is any ſuch thing? When he had raged awhile, he ſaid, I believe you have read the book of *Job*, and made it all your own. I anſwered, I have need of patience, who have men of ſuch principles as you to talk with; that regard not what they ſay to provoke one: But I thank God you have not done it yet. He replied, his reaſon for ſpeaking ſo was becauſe I could not be quiet with my nonſenſe and inſpiration. And I hear, you have preached ſeveral times ſince you came, and have filled the heads of many in this town with your new doctrine. I told him, I had not preached publickly ſince I came, but did not know how ſoon I might. Then he ſhook his ſtick and ſtamped, and ſaid in anger, "If you do preach publickly, we ſhall take an order with you, which ſhall be worſe then ſending you for a ſoldier." Let God look to that, I anſwered; for by his grace, I can love all men, but fear none that can kill the body only. I aſſure you, it is not the fear of man which ſhall hinder me from preaching; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. When he began to be calm a little, I aſked him, Sir, ſuppoſe you had been inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt to preach the goſpel; if the outward ordination was refuſed you, when you believed yourſelf called according to the will of Chriſt to preach, would you forbear preaching? That is, would you obey man or God? I

ſuppoſe, ſaid he, you think you have put an hard queſtion to me. But hard or eaſy, he never anſwered it; and I cannot remember that ever I ſaw him ſince.

On *Saturday*, ſeveral deſired me to preach on *Sunday* morning. I told them I ſhould take a walk out to the moor, at half an hour at ſeven. Accordingly I did ſo, and found thrice as many as I expected, and preached to about three hundred well-behaved people, who begged me to preach again at night. I anſwered ſome of them I did not know but I might: yet I gave no public notice. But one told another and ſpread it through the city.

I went to the *minſter*, and heard the biſhop preach, and received the bleſſed ſacrament at his hands. At ſeven in the evening, I went to the moor, and found an unexpected congregation, I believe ſix thouſand people. But there was nothing prepared for me to ſtand on, and great part of the ſoldiers were there, almoſt drunk, and began to quarrel with the people that crowded me; ſo that I ſaw there was likely to be miſchief done, and prevented it by withdrawing. If I had preached, I believe they would have behaved quietly, for they ſeemed to have a great deſire to hear what this doctrine is. I had not the opportunity of ſatisfying them at this time: but they that had heard in the morning, told others, and inflamed them the more with deſire to hear for themſelves. Several ſent for me to their houſes,

and I

and others came to me: ſo I ſee God will work, and who ſhall hinder? Lord, open their underſtandings that they may know the things which belong to their everlaſting peace.

On *Monday* I heard that ſome clergymen were with the officers; and, at night, one of the officers ſent for me, and ſaid, What, you cannot leave off your preaching yet; but we muſt be blamed about you. But if ever you preach publickly more, you ſhall be ſeverely whipped. My anſwer was, I am not careful in this matter. It is better to obey God than men. I believe it is the will of God that I ſhould preach; and I have not taken man to pleaſe in any thing that will offend my God.

With many threats he bade me go, but I made no promiſe to obey him, neither did I intend it in this caſe; for I had promiſed to go to *Acombe*, a village about a mile out of *York*, the next evening. Accordingly I went, and preached to almoſt all the inhabitants, in a field. The Lord gave me to ſpeak his word freely, and ſent it with power to their heart. The rock was ſtruck, and the water guſhed out. All whom I ſaw behaved well. Many ſaid they hoped I would come again; "for let men ſay what they will of "this people, this is the truth, and ſo we ſhall "find it one day."

As I came down the ſtreet, an alderman of *York* and his wife, who had been to hear me, were ſtanding at the gate of his houſe, and he called

to me, and said, if you please to accept of a glass of any sort of liquor my house affords, it is at your service. I said, I thank you for your good-will, but I do not care to drink. Several others offered me drink, but I took none. They prayed me to come once a week, as long as I stayed in *York*. Lord, be mindful of this people, I beseech thee, and send them those, who will preach righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ. And O that they may be found in the wedding-garment in that day, when every covering, which is not of thy Spirit, will be found as filthy rags before thy pure eyes.

All this week I had company as much as I could tell what to do with. Several desired me to preach on *Sunday* morning. I did not promise, but went to discourse with about a score, at seven, on the moor. Others had a suspicion of my being there, and I believe 200 flocked round me, as soon as they saw me walking, and begged me to preach to them. I told them I stand in jeopardy if I do; but they answered, we are in more danger than you, for our souls are in danger. It came into my mind, that I had freely received, and ought to give freely. Wherefore I preached to them, and God was with us of a truth, and the hearts of the people were opened to receive the word in love.

I came to sister *Townshend*'s, and found my own brother, and brother *Mitchel* come to see me; and we were comforted together. Our time

time was ſhort, for I had but half an hour, before I went to anſwer for what I had done. Somebody had told the enſign that I had been preaching; and he ſent for me, and ſaid, *Damn your blood, Sir, have you been preaching this morning?* I ſaid, I had. He ſwore he would have no preaching nor praying in their regiment. Then I ſaid, " Sir, you ought to have no ſwearing nor curſing neither; for ſurely I have as much right to pray and preach, as you have to curſe and ſwear."

* He ſwore again that I ſhould be damnably whipped for what I had done. I anſwered, " Let God look to that, for the cauſe is his. But if you do not leave off your curſing and ſwearing, it will be worſe with you then with me." Then he ſaid, " Corporal, put this fellow in priſon directly." The corporal ſaid, " Sir, I muſt not carry a man to priſon, unleſs I give in his crime with him." Well, ſaid he, it is for diſobeying orders. So I ſee an hundred may diſobey all the orders of God, and there is no notice taken of them; nor do the common people cry out hang them out of the way: but if one of a thouſand begins to reprove them for ſin, they hale him to priſon, as if he had killed father or mother. But ſo it was from the beginning; for a murderer was preferred before the Prince of life.

I was put priſoner juſt as the church began, and I ſent a man to tell my brother that the

word of God was fulfilled, *Behold the devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, that ye may be tried*, and deſired their prayers, that I may be faithful unto death.——As ſoon as I was within the priſon, my heart was filled with joy unſpeakable, and my mouth with praiſe to my dear Redeemer. This alſo ſhall turn to the glory of God: for ſeveral men of good report heard me this morning, and teſtified that I had ſpoke the truth: and they would not (they ſaid) be guilty of ſending that man to priſon for preaching, not for all the world. This cauſed many to come to me, who offered me wine and ſtrong drink. I told them I did not care for any ſort of ſtrong liquor; but ſuch as I had gave I unto them; ſome little books, and the words of God, which he gave me plentifully to ſpeak to them, without reſpect of any man's perſon.

* Two nights and near three days, I was kept priſoner at this time; during which, my ſoul was as a watered garden, and I could ſing praiſes to God all the day long, for he turned my captivity into joy; and gave me to reſt as well on the boards as if I had been on a bed of down. Now could I ſay, God's ſervice is perfect freedom, and I was carried out much in prayer, that my enemies might drink of the ſame river of peace which my God gave ſo largely to me.

Now did I more plainly ſee the dreadful ſtate of the unconverted than ever before: and thought if it might be the converſion of my enemies. I could

could be content that they ſhould tread me under their feet. But God only knows how it would have been, had I been ſo tried. Yet thus far he hath helped me, and given me ſtrength for my day. Indeed I have found him a God of truth, as far as I have tried him; and I put forth the hand of my faith, to lay hold of his ſtrength for what he ſhall next call me to.

On *Tueſday* I was fetched out, and brought before the major. There were ſeveral of the young officers with him, who ſmiled when I came into the room; for they had been ſeveral times to ſee me in priſon, and had ſwore I ſhould be ſeverely whipt. But I told them, if they did not repent, and leave off that ſwearing, they ſhould periſh eternally, (and I ſhall be witneſs againſt you) and that will be worſe than your whipping me for Chriſt's ſake.

Now they ſeemed to rejoice, as if their words were going to be fulfilled. The major called, "*John Nelſon*, what was you put in priſon for?" For warning the people to flee from the wrath to come, I anſwered; and if this be a crime, I ſhall commit it again, unleſs you cut out my tongue: for it is better for me to die than diſobey God. "Well, but if that be all, he replied, that is no crime: for, when you have done your duty, I do not care if you preach every night in an houſe, or any private place out of the town; but I would not have you make any mobs." That ſaid I, is far from my deſign. "Well, ſaid he,

you may go home to your quarters, and if I have a convenient time, I will fend for you, and hear you myfelf; for I wifh all men were like you." Here my adverfaries hung down their heads, and gave off fmiling.

As I went to fifter *Townfend*'s, I heard that we were to leave *York* on *Thurfday* at four in the morning, and march to *Sunderland*. I had a great defire to have feen my wife firft; but fhe did not get my letter foon enough. Many of the people came and faid, "We are forry you are going fo foon from *York*; but if you get your liberty, we hope both you and Mr. *Wefley* will come: for we have need of fuch plain dealing, and thoufands in the city would be glad to hear. You fee what a populous wicked place it is: pray do not forget us, but think of us when you fee us not. We expected fome of you two or three years ago; but you had no regard for our fouls, till God brought you by force. Surely you was not fold hither, but fent for our good; therefore forget us not."

O the tendernefs which this people fhewed, and defire for the word of God! It moved me to cry out, Lord have mercy on them, and let them hear thy gofpel, and find it thy power unto falvation; for why fhould thy people perifh for lack of knowledge?

On *Thurfday* morning we ftood two hours in the ftreets before we fet out of town. We marched to *Efingwould* that day, and when we were drawn

drawn up in the ſtreet, the people perceived me to be the *Methodiſt* preacher they had read of in the news-papers. They told one another, and flocked about me, as if the ſoldiers had brought a monſter into the town.

When we had ſtaid near an hour in the ſtreet, I and five more were billeted at one houſe, where the people were ſo poor, they had not ſix ſeats for us to ſit on, nor any beds: ſo we came back to the officers quarters, and they ordered four of us to another houſe.

God gave me to ſpeak plain to them, and ſeveral of their neighbours, who came to ſee the *Methodiſt*. And they ſaid, if this be the *Methodiſt* doctrine, we pray God we may have it preached in this town, for hundreds would be glad to hear you.

In the evening the head man of the town came in. He is a profeſt papiſt, but a moral honeſt man, and one who bears a good character in his neighbourhood. He aſked me many queſtions, and God gave me to anſwer him to his ſatisfaction. Indeed I never ſaw a man of his rank ſo teachable and ſo humble. His gold lace did not make him above liſtening to the goſpel, he ſeemed a man of ſound reaſon, as well as liberal education. I ſpoke near an hour, to prove the doctrine of juſtification by faith; and that both from the Old and New Teſtament. I ſhewed the fruits of that juſtifying faith, and the neceſſity of every man's having it, that he may eſcape the damna-

tion of hell. The word had such an effect upon him, that his eyes discovered the tenderness of his heart; and, when I had ended, he said, I think no man in his senses would dare to hinder you from instructing sinners in the way of salvation; as for my part, I shall be glad to see you at liberty; and if you get clear of these men, and come again this way, I would have you call on me.

I was amazed to find such a man among the papists, having met very few, either teachers or hearers of our own church, but what hold the popish principles ten times stronger than this man, who calls himself a papist. When he went away, he forced two shillings into my hand, which I would have returned, telling him I received no money, and needed none; but he would not take it again, saying he could afford it, and I might have occasion for it on my journey. O God, be merciful to him that gives a cup of cold water to thy servants.

Next morning, at two, the drum beat for us to march out of town. By eleven on *Friday*, we got to *Northallerton*; and by twelve, settled in quarters. I went into the market-place, and spoke to those I found there, of the way of salvation; I hope not in vain. Afterwards I was sitting alone, and there came a shop-keeper, and said, if I would go to his house, he would give me a glass of any liquor I pleased to drink. I told him, I did not drink any strong liquors.

Well

Well but, he ſaid, I deſire your company, if you pleaſe, for half an hour. I went to his houſe, and drank tea with him and his family, and ſpoke plain to them. They received my exhortation with thankfulneſs, and ſaid, we have heard much of you, but never heard any of you before. Several of you have paſſed through the town, and we wondered they never preached here. If you come again, we hope you will call and ſee us. I gave them a book, and returned to my quarters.

Next morning, at one, the drum beat for us to march, and we got to *Darlington* by nine. Here I was known to ſeveral; and, by them, made known to almoſt all the town. Many came to my quarters to talk with me; and others, ſent for me. I find the people hunger after the word, as if there were no bibles in the nation.

We reſted here on *Sunday*, and I had many to ſee me. When they heard what our doctrine was, they cried, it is a ſhame to ſend a man for a ſoldier for ſpeaking the truth; for let all men ſay what they will, this is the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

In the evening one of the officers came to me, and ſaid, Well, Sir, why was you not at church to-day? I anſwered, I was, Sir, and if you had been there, you might have ſeen me; for I never miſs going, when I have an opportunity. Well, Sir, he added, have you preached ſince you came hither. Not publicly yet, I replied. He ſwore he wiſhed I would, that he might puniſh

niſh me ſeverely. But, Sir, (I told him) if you do not repent and leave off that habit of ſwearing, you will be worſe puniſhed than you are able to puniſh me. He ſaid, I will make you mind your firelock, and leave off your preaching. Yes, Sir, I anſwered when I leave off ſpeaking.

This was he that put me in priſon at *York* for preaching. As *Saul* hunted *David*, ſo has this man hunted my ſoul; but I truſt the ſame God that delivered *David*, will deliver me from cruel men.

I gave ſeveral books away in this town alſo: which we left the next morning.

I was much ſurprized at the good-nature of the ſoldiers in all this march, for I believed twenty offered to carry the gun for me, and any thing elſe I had. God, I found, ſupported me wonderfully in all theſe trials; for I could travel fifteen or twenty miles faſting, as well as thoſe who eat and drink two or three times by the way. Surely man doth not live by bread alone; but the Lord is the ſtrength of *Iſrael*; the defender of all them that put their truſt in him. O God, be thou my guide unto death.

We got to *Durham* by nine on *Monday*; but, in our way to *Darlington*, we had a river to croſs, and were obliged to wade through it. The day was very hot, ſo that I had ſweat much, and catched cold immediately. I found myſelf much out of order when we got to *Durham*, and deſired I might lay down a little. Corporal

W——

W—— lay down with me, and fell aſleep. At twelve, I awaked ſuddenly, as if ſome man had called me, and ſaid to the corporal, I muſt go to the market-place directly, for what I know not, neither which way to go to it. Nor I, he ſaid, but I will go with you, and we can enquire the way. Accordingly we did; and juſt as we got thither, my brother *Weſtell* was enquiring for me among the ſoldiers. Well, ſaid Mr. *W*——, I did never ſee ſuch a thing in my life, that you ſhould thus awake, and come to meet your friend the minute he came to ſeek for you.

We were much comforted together. He told me, that Mr. *John Weſley* would be at *Durham* ſoon after four o'clock. I gave God thanks for that news. We went to a common, about a mile from the town, and there we met Mr. *W*——. My heart rejoiced to ſee him, and great reaſon have I to give God thanks that I ever ſaw him, who was an inſtrument in God's hands of plucking me as a brand out of the fire. And I have found him God's meſſenger for good ever ſince.

We came to the ſign of the Angel, and had ſome converſation together. He exhorted me to watch and pray, and did not doubt but my captivity would turn to the glory of God and the furtherance of the goſpel. At ſix I went to anſwer my call, and Mr. *W*—— went into the *minſter*.

Afterwards I and *Thomas Beard*, my fellow-priſoner,

priſoner, met Mr. *W*—— and our brother *Errington*, and went with them to the inn and ſtaid till nine. When we had prayed together, we commended each other to the grace of God, and ſo parted in body, not in ſpirit.

Next morning the drum beat at one, and we were called up into the market-place, and cauſed to ſtand till three, and then marched off for *Sunderland*, which we reached by nine. When we were brought up in the town, I heard ſeveral of the inhabitants ſay to one another, That is the *Methodiſt* mentioned in the news-papers, for his look is not like other mens. O my God, why am I and my fellows become men that are wondered at.

While we ſtood, a landlord came to us and ſaid, Sir, I wiſh you would quarter at my houſe; for I expect two, and ſhould be glad to have you for one, and whom you chuſe for a comrade. I choſe corporal *W*——, and aſked for the billet as the man deſired, but could not get it. But I believe we got the beſt quarters we could have in *Sunderland*. Thus, I ſee, if we acknowledge God in all our ways, he will direct our paths.

When I went to exerciſe I had many came to ſee me, and fell in diſcourſe with them, but could get no hold of them; for they aſſented and conſented to all I ſaid; and were ſo full of what the world calls good manners, that all I ſpoke was as written on the ſand, though I talked with them ſeveral days. Yet ſome, I truſt,

truſt, will be mindful of their everlaſting welfare.

On *Saturday* night I was ordered to ſtand centry on the *Sunday* following, and deſired I might ſtand another day, or pay for my guard. I believe ten men offered to ſtand for me, but all in vain; for the enſign was the officer of the guard that day, and he proteſted he would make me do it myſelf. I aſked, Sir, what have I done that I cannot have the ſame liberty as another man? He anſwered, You love the church too well, and I will keep you from it, and make them go who do not like to go. Keep me, O my God, from all anger or ill-will, for this man is ſet to prove me. I went to the guard-houſe, and many came to talk with me; but I did not ſtand centry, till ſix on *Monday* morning. The enſign's ſaying in the open ſtreet, I ſhould not go to church, becauſe I loved it, drew many of the people to me; and will turn, I am perſuaded, to the furtherance of the goſpel.

The week after Mr. *M*—— came. He had heard what the enſign had done, and came to me, and aſked me how I did, and ſaid, I am informed Mr. *A*—— hindered you from going to church; but I will aſſure you, you ſhall not be hindered again as long as you are with us.

I have found ſomething of good in this man ever ſince I knew him. He will hear reaſon, and ſeems to make a conſcience both of his words and actions.

I was

I was near an hour in his chamber, and he aſked me of the principal points of our doctrine. I made them as plain to him as I could, and he heard me with great candor, and ſaid, he had no fault at all to find with it. He told me, The firſt time that ever I ſaw you, I ſaw you was no vagrant; but it would be a ſcandal to all who were concerned in ſending or receiving ſuch an one; for the act of parliament does not reach ſuch as you. But the reſt of the officers ſaid, they could not help it, for you was delivered to us as a ſoldier by the j——s, and they are the rogues. No, Sir, I anſwered the j——s are in no fault, for I was never before one of them yet. He ſaid, Who ſent you then? I replied, the commiſſioners. What evidence had they againſt you? The accuſation againſt me was, *He preaches to the people*, by the conſtable's deputy; and he alſo confeſſed he knew no other evil of me. Well, but the act of toleration clears you from that's being a crime. What had you no man to ſpeak for you? Yes, ſeveral were ready, but none were ſuffered to do it; neither were the papers regarded which my honeſt neighbours and gentlemen ſent on my behalf. For one of the commiſſioners was the *parſon* of our pariſh, and *he was the evidence againſt me*; and they ſaid they would hear no other. Nay, ſaid Mr. *M*——, it is no wonder they treated you ſo, if the prieſt was concerned; for they have been at the head of all the perſecutions for religion which have

have been ſince the world began. I ſee them ſo wicked, that I do not mind religion at all. But this is my religion; I believe there is one God, and that Chriſt his Son died for the world; and I ſtrive to do honeſtly to all men; and to do a good turn to the meaneſt if I can. And I think my religion is better than theirs who preach one thing and do another. For I have ſeen ſo much of them, that I will aſſure you, I would hear you as ſoon as any—in the land.

He ſaid, he could like to read ſome of our books; and I made him a preſent of *An earneſt Appeal*, and the *Character of a Methodiſt*, and the ſermon *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*. He has told me ſince, that he has read, and likes them well.

This day he procured me a furlow to go to *Newcaſtle* for ſeven days: and I found I did not go up without the Lord; for my ſoul, and thoſe of the people were refreſhed with the love of God. Several of the ſoldiers came to hear me preach, and gave great attention to the things that were ſpoken. I found great freedom to ſpeak to the children, whom God has called out of the evil world, to ſerve him in this place. Watch over them, O my God, for good, and be thou their guide unto death.

On *Tueſday* my time was out to go back. I preached at *Painſhee* in the afternoon, to an attentive congregation, and got to *Sunderland* by ſeven at night. This week I received a letter from

from Mr. *C*---- *W*----, that the E. of *S*---- had aſſured the L. *H*----, that I ſhould be ſet at liberty in a few days. I ſaid, The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious, for he hath taken my cauſe in hand, and it ſhall turn to his glory; for he alone hath done the work, when all human means had ſeemed to fail. My enemies cried, We have made his bonds ſtrong, and none can deliver him out of our ſnare; for we have put it out of the officers' power to diſcharge him for any price. Lord, I beſeech thee, open their eyes and let them ſee the ſnare which Satan hath laid for their ſouls, and eſcape by ſpeedy repentance and faith in thy blood.

This week I was much out of health by the ſurfeit I got in marching; but found preſent eaſe by being blooded. The week following I was ſent for by the captain to the ſtore-houſe; and he inſiſted on my going, though I was ſo ill. When I came there, he and three more officers came, and aſked me how I did. I told them; and they ſaid, Here is a good coat for you to keep you from cold, that you may recover your health. I ſaid, I have coats enough if that would do, I need none of yours. They ſaid, They would make me wear it, and all the other cloathing belonging to a ſoldier. I anſwered, You may array me as a man of war, but I ſhall never fight. They aſked, What is your reaſon? And my anſwer was, I cannot ſee any thing in this world worth fighting for. I want neither its riches

nor

nor honours, but the honour that cometh from God only. I regard neither its ſmiles nor its frowns; and have no buſineſs in it but to get well out of it.

* Then they ordered the ſerjeant to pull off my coat, and put a red one on me. When he had done it, they turned me round and rejoiced over me. I ſaid, you ſee the ſcripture cannot be broken, where it ſaith, *If they do this in the green tree, what will they do in the dry?* What do you mean by that, they aſked? And I anſwered, *The ſoldiers took* Jeſus *and ſtripped him, and put a ſcarlet robe upon him, and mocked him*, as you have treated me, his ſervant, this day, for ſpeaking his words. He indeed hath the greater condemnation who delivered me into your hands; but I pray God forgive you all. Theſe words turned their countenance and behaviour towards me, and one of them laboured from that time to find ſome way for me to be ſet at liberty.

During my three weeks illneſs, many of the brethren and ſiſters from *Newcaſtle*, *Biddick*, and *Painſher*, came to ſee me, and God was pleaſed at that time to give ſome the knowledge of ſalvation by the remiſſion of their ſins; and to comfort all our hearts with his love. O may we ever keep his commandments, that we may continue in his love; even as he hath kept his Father's commandments, and continued in his love.

On

On *Friday, July* 27, *John Graham*, of *Sunderland*, came to me with an open letter in his hand, and ſaid, Come, my friend, I have good news for thee. God hath heard the prayers of the people in thy behalf, and ſent thee deliverance. Here, read this letter, which the major hath ſent the captain on thy account. It was on this wiſe, "I have received an order from the Earl of *S*—— to diſcharge *John Nelſon*, who was preſt from *Birſtal*, in the weſt-riding of *Yorkſhire*. Therefore take his arms and cloathing from him which he has received, and let me know if he has had any pay ſince he came, and ſend him to me with a furlow." Accordingly I delivered all things I had belonging to them, to lieutenant *M*——, who ſaid, He was glad that I was to be releaſed, and wiſhed me well whereſoever I went. I had a furlow given me, and ſet out in the afternoon with ſome that were come from *Newcaſtle* to ſee me; and got there by ſeven.

All the ſociety gave God thanks on my behalf, as ſoon as they ſaw me, for they had knowledge of my deliverance before I had. Next morning I went to the major's quarters about nine. When I had waited about an hour, I was ordered to come at half an hour paſt eleven; I did ſo, and waited another hour. Then the major called to me, and bade me come at half an hour after two, and he would ſpeak to me. I came again as he ordered me, and when I had ſtaid near

near an hour, one of the captains called me, and said, the major is gone to dine with the mayor of the town, and you will hardly see him to-night, but you will be sure to find him to-morrow morning. I told him that would not do for me; for my business was not to be done on the *sabbath*.

Near six in the evening I saw the major go along the street, and followed him to his lodgings. He said, I have an order from the Lord *S*—— to discharge you. He sent for the adjutant, and ordered him to bring two printed discharges with him. He came, and three more of the officers with him, and filled up the discharge. When he had done, he said, I wish all the men in our regiment would behave as well as Mr. *Nelson* has done since he came among us, it would be much better for us and them too. Then our lieutenant said, Indeed he has done much good since he came among us; for we have not one third of the cursing and swearing in the regiment, which we had before he came. And he has given me several private exhortations and some of their books; and I thank him for them and his advice, for it is good. Then the major said, I wish I had a regiment of such men as he is in all respects, save that one, his refusing to fight: I would not care what enemy I had to meet, or where my lot was cast.—Sir, if you fear God, I said, you have no need to fear any thing else; for they that fear him depart from evil, and

seek

ſeek to do his will, and not their own. They know that in his hand are the iſſues of life and death; therefore they fear not him that can kill the body only, but him that can deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.

Well, ſaid the major, if you are ſo ſcrupulous about fighting, what muſt we do? I anſwered, It is your trade, and if you had a better, it might be better for you. But ſomebody, he replied, muſt fight. I ſaid, If all men lived by faith in the Son of God, wars would be at an end. That is true, he anſwered, and if it was ſo, we ſhould learn war no more.

Here one of the captains ſpoke, You ſaid one day, if we have not the Spirit of God, we are dead while we live. Did I ſo? *Yes you did.* Then I will prove it; both from the doctrine of the church of *England* (of which I profeſs myſelf a member) and from the word of God. God gave me to ſpeak plainly from both for about twenty minutes; none contradicting me, but they ſtood as dumb men.

Then the major ſaid, Here is ſuch a diſcharge for you as I never gave before, but once; and put it into my hand. I told them, I have now delivered my own ſoul, and am pure from the blood of you all; for I have not ſpared either poor or rich, ſince I came among you, but have ſet life and death before you all as you came in my way. I have declared unto you, that the wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the peo-

ple

ple that forget God; and contrarywife, the bleſſed ſtate of them that repent, and obey the goſpel of Chriſt our Saviour. And I pray God give you all to underſtand the things which make for your everlaſting peace, and bleſs you in turning every one of you from your iniquities. Then ſhall we meet another day to part no more. The major ſaid, I wiſh you well wherever you go, for I believe you *Methodiſts* are well-meaning people; and ſo ſaid they all. I gave them a book, and took my leave of them.

I went to the room and preached that night, and had ſeveral of the ſoldiers to hear me, who gave great attention to what I ſaid. Then I took my leave of them; and ſome of them wept, and deſired me pray for them, and ſaid, We are glad you are ſet at liberty, but ſorry to part with you. I commended them to God, and to the word of his grace, and truſt they will mind the exhortation, and become good ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt.

On this 28th day of *July*, I was ſet at liberty to go whereſoever I thought was moſt to God's glory, who has delivered me from my bonds. For he hath done the work, and to him the glory is due. What am I, that he ſhould ſo care for me! But he is a God that heareth the prayer; and the cries of his people inclined him to take my cauſe in hand. Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul, who hath kept thee in all trials, and hath not ſuffered thee to faint in ſore temptation.

Now I find the words true which Mr. *John Wesley* first sent me at *York*. "Well, my brother, is the God whom you serve able to deliver you, and do you find him faithful to his word? Is his grace still sufficient for you?—I doubt it not; he will not suffer you to be weary or faint in your mind. But he had work for you to do which you knew not of, and thus his council was to be fulfilled! O lose no time! Who knows how many souls God may by this means deliver into your hands. Shall not all these things be for the furtherance of the gospel? And is not the time coming when we shall cry out together, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. BAILY, of *Corke.*

In anſwer to a

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY.

Limerick, June 8, 1750.

Rev. SIR,

1. WHY do you not ſubſcribe your name to a performance ſo perfectly agreeing both as to the matter and form, with the ſermons you have been occaſionally preaching, for more than a year laſt paſt? As to your ſeeming

ing to disclaim it by saying once and again, *I am but a plain, simple man:* and, *the doctrine you teach is only a revival of the old antinominian heresy, I think they call it.* I presume it is only a pious fraud. But how came so plain and simple a man, to know the meaning of the *Greek* word *Philalethes?* Sir, this is not of a piece. If you did not care to own your child, had not you better have subscribed the second (as well as the first) † letter, *George Fisher?*

2. I confess you have timed your performance well. When the other pointless thing was published, I came unluckily to *Corke* on the self-same day. But you might now suppose I was at a convenient distance. However I will not plead this as an excuse, for taking no notice of your last favour: although, to say the truth, I scarce know how to answer it, as you write in a language I am not accustomed to. Both Dr. *Tucker*, Dr. *Church*, and all the other gentlemen, who have wrote to me in public for some years, have wrote as gentlemen, having some regard to their own, whatever my character was. But as you fight in the dark, you regard not what weapons you use. We are not therefore on even terms. I cannot answer you in kind. I am constrained to leave this to your good allies of ‡ *Blackpool* and *Fair-lane*.

I shall,

† The letter thus subscribed was published at Corke, on May 30 last.

‡ Celebrated parts of Corke.

I ſhall, firſt, ſtate the facts, on which the preſent controverſy turns, and then conſider the moſt material parts of your performance.

Firſt, I am to ſtate the facts. But here I am under a great diſadvantage, having few of my papers by me. Excuſe me therefore if I do not give ſo full an account now, as I may poſſibly do hereafter; if I only give you for the preſent the extracts of ſome papers, which were lately put into my hands.

Thomas Jones of *Corke*, merchant, depoſes,

That on *May* 3, 1749, *Nicholas Butler*, ballad-ſinger, came before the houſe of this deponent, and aſſembled a large mob; that this deponent went to *Daniel Crone*, Eſq; then mayor of Corke, and deſired that he would put a ſtop to thoſe riots; aſking at the ſame time, whether he gave the ſaid *Butler* leave to go about in this manner? That Mr. Mayor ſaid, he neither gave him leave, neither did he hinder him: that in the evening *Butler* gathered a larger mob than before, and went to the houſe where the people called *Methodiſts*, were aſſembled to hear the word of God, and as they came out, threw dirt and hurt ſeveral of them.

That on May 4, this deponent with ſome others, went to the mayor and told what had been done, adding, "If your worſhip pleaſes to ſpeak only three words to *Butler*, it will all be over:" that the mayor gave his word and honour, "There ſhould be no more of it, he

would put an entire ſtop to it:" that notwithſtanding, a larger mob than ever came to the houſe the ſame evening: that they threw much dirt and many ſtones at the people both while they were in the houſe, and when they came out: that the mob then fell upon them both on men and women, with clubs, hangers and ſwords, ſo that many of them were much wounded, and loſt a conſiderable quantity of blood.

That on *May 5*, this deponent informed the mayor of all, and alſo that *Butler* had openly declared, "There ſhould be a greater mob than ever there was that night:" that the mayor promiſed he would prevent it: that in the evening *Butler* did bring a greater mob than ever: that this deponent, hearing the mayor deſigned to go out of the way, ſet two men to watch him, and when the riot was begun, went to the ale-houſe, and enquired for him: that the woman of the houſe denying he was there, this deponent inſiſted he was, declared he would not go till he had ſeen him; and began ſearching the houſe: that Mr. Mayor then appearing, he demanded his aſſiſtance, to ſuppreſs a riotous mob; that when the mayor came in ſight of them, he beckoned to *Butler*, who immediately came down from the place where he ſtood; that the mayor then went with this deponent, and looked on many of the people covered with dirt and blood: that ſome of them ſtill remained in the houſe, fearing their lives, till *James Chatterton* and *John Reily*,

Reily, eſquires, ſheriffs of *Corke*, and *Hugh Millard*, junior, Eſq; alderman, turned them out to the mob, and nailed up the doors.

2. *Elizabeth Holleran* of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on *May* 3, as ſhe was going down *Caſtle-ſtreet*, ſhe ſaw *Nicholas Butler* on a table, with ballads in one hand and a bible in the other: that ſhe expreſt ſome concern thereat; on which ſheriff *Reily* ordered his bailiff to carry her to *Bridewell*; that afterward the bailiff came and ſaid, "His maſter ordered ſhe ſhould be carried to goal:" and that ſhe continued in goal from *May* 3, about eight in the evening, till between ten and twelve on *May* 5.

3. *John Stockdale*, of *Corke*, tallow-chandler, depoſes,

That on *May* 5, while he and others were aſſembled to hear the word of God, *Nicholas Butler* came down to the houſe where they were with a very numerous mob: that when this deponent came out, they threw all manner of dirt and abundance of ſtones at him; that they then beat, bruiſed and cut him in ſeveral places: that ſeeing his wife on the ground and the mob abuſing her ſtill, he called out and beſought them not to kill his wife: that on this one of them ſtruck him with a large ſtick, as did alſo many others, ſo that he was hurt in ſeveral parts, and his face in a gore of blood.

Daniel Sullivan of *Corke*, baker, depoſes,

That every day but one from the 6th to the

16th of *May*, *Nicholas Butler* aſſembled a riotous mob, before this deponent's houſe; that they abuſed all who came into the ſhop, to the great damage of this deponent's buſineſs; that on or about the 15th *Butler* ſwore he would bring a mob the next day and pull down his houſe: that accordingly on the 16th he did bring a large mob and beat or abuſed all that came to the houſe: that the mayor walked by while the mob was ſo employed, but did not hinder them; that afterwards, they broke his windows, threw dirt and ſtones into his ſhop, and ſpoiled a great quantity of his goods.

Daniel Sullivan is ready to depoſe farther, that from the 16th of *May* to the 28th, the mob gathered every day before his houſe: that on *Sunday* the 28th, *Butler* ſwore, "They would come the next day and pull down the houſe of that heretic dog:" and called aloud to the mob, "Let the heretic dogs indict you; I will bring you all off without a farthing coſt."

That accordingly on *May* 29, *Butler* came with a greater mob than before: that he went to the mayor and begged him to come, which he for ſome time refuſed to do; but after much importunity, roſe up, and walked with him down the ſtreet; that when they were in the midſt of the mob, the mayor ſaid aloud, "It is your own fault, for entertaining theſe preachers; if you will turn them out of your houſe, I will engage there ſhall be no more harm done; but if you will

will not turn them out, you muſt take what you will get :" that upon this the mob ſet up an huzza, and threw ſtones faſter than before : that he ſaid, " This is fine uſage, under a proteſtant government ; if I had a prieſt ſaying maſs in every room of it, my houſe would not be touched ;" that the mayor replied, " The prieſts are tolerated ; but you are not : you talk too much ; go in, and ſhut up your doors :" that ſeeing no remedy, he did ſo, and the mob continued breaking the windows and throwing ſtones in till near twelve at night.

That on *May* 31, the ſaid *Sullivan* and two more, went and informed the mayor of what the mob was then doing : that it was not without great importunity, they brought him as far as the exchange : that he would go no farther, nor ſend any help, tho' ſome that were much bruiſed and wounded came by : that ſome hours after, when the mob had finiſhed their work he ſent a party of ſoldiers to guard the walls.

5. *John Stockdale* depoſes farther, that on *May* 31, he with others was quietly hearing the word of God, when *Butler* and his mob came down to the houſe : that as they came out, the mob threw ſhowers of dirt and ſtones ; that many were hurt, many beat, bruiſed and cut, among whom was this deponent, who was ſo bruiſed and cut, that the effuſion of blood from his head could not be ſtopped for a conſiderable time.

6. *John M'Nerny*, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 31ſt of *May* laſt, as this deponent with others was hearing a ſermon, *Butler* came down with a large mob: that the ſtones and dirt coming in faſt, obliged the congregation to ſhut the doors, and lock themſelves in: that the mob broke open the door, on which this deponent endeavoured to eſcape through a window: that not being able to do it, he returned into the houſe where he ſaw the mob tear up the pews, benches and floor, part of which they afterwards burnt in the open ſtreet, and carried away part for their own uſe.

7. *Daniel Sullivan* is ready to depoſe farther,

That *Butler* with a large mob went about from ſtreet to ſtreet, and from houſe to houſe abuſing, threatening and beating whomſoever he pleaſed, from *June* 1ſt, to the 16th, when they aſſaulted, bruiſed, and cut *Ann Jenkins*; and from the 16th to the 30th, when a woman whom they had beaten, miſcarried, and narrowly eſcaped with life.

Some of the particulars were as follows.

Thomas Burnet, of *Corke*, nailor, depoſes,

That on or about the 12th of *June*, as this deponent was at work in his maſter's ſhop, *Nicholas Butler* came with a great mob to the door, and ſeeing this deponent, told him, he was an heretic dog, and his ſoul was burning in hell: that this deponent aſking, "Why do you uſe me thus?" *Butler* took up a ſtone and ſtruck him ſo violently on the ſide, that he was thereby

thereby rendered incapable of working for upwards of a week: that he hit this deponent's wife with another ſtone, without any kind of provocation, which ſo hurt her, that ſhe was obliged to take to her bed, and has not been right well ſince.

Ann Cooſhea, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on or about the 12th of *June*, as ſhe was ſtanding at her father's door, *Nicholas Butler* with a riotous mob, began to abuſe this deponent and her family, calling them heretic bitches, ſaying, they were damned and all their ſouls were in hell; that then, without any provocation, he took up a great ſtone, and threw it at this deponent, which ſtruck her on the head with ſuch force that it deprived her of her ſenſes for ſome time.

Ann Wright, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on or about the 12th of *June*, as this deponent was in her own houſe, *Butler* and his mob came before her door, calling her and her family heretic bitches, and ſwearing, "He would make her houſe hotter than hell fire;" that he threw dirt and ſtones at them, hit her in the face, daſhed all the goods about which ſhe had in her window, and ſhe really believes, would have daſhed out her brains, had ſhe not quitted her ſhop, and fled for her life.

Margaret Griffin, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 24th of *June*, as this deponent was about her buſineſs, *Butler* and his mob came up, took hold on her, tore her cloaths, ſtruck

her ſeveral times, and cut her mouth: that after ſhe broke from him, he and his mob purſued her to her houſe, and would have broken in, had not ſome neighbours interpoſed: that he had beat and abuſed her ſeveral times before, and one of thoſe times to ſuch a degree, that ſhe was all in a gore of blood, and continued ſpitting blood, for ſeveral days after.

Jacob Connor, clothier, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 24th of *June*, as he was employed in his lawful buſineſs, *Butler* and his mob came up, and without any manner of provocation fell upon him: that they beat him till they cauſed ſuch an effuſion of blood, as could not be ſtopt for a conſiderable time; and that he verily believes, had not a gentleman interpoſed, they would have killed him on the ſpot.

9. *Ann Hughes* of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 29th of *June*, ſhe aſked *Nicholas Butler*, why he broke open her houſe on the 21ſt? That hereon he called her many abuſive names, (being attended with his uſual mob) dragged her up and down, tore her cloaths in pieces. and with his ſword ſtabbed and cut her in both her arms.

Daniel Filts, blackſmith, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 29th of *June*, *Butler* and a riotous mob came before his door, called him many abuſive names, drew his hanger and threatened to ſtab him: that he and his mob the next day aſſaulted the houſe of this deponent with drawn

ſwords:

ſwords: and that he is perſuaded, had not one who came by, prevented, they would have taken away his life.

10. *Mary Fuller* of *Corke*, depoſes, that on the 30th of *June*, *Butler*, at the head of his mob, came between nine and ten at night to the deponent's ſhop, with a naked ſword in his hand: that he ſwore, he would cleave the deponent's ſcull, and immediately made a full ſtroke at her head; whereupon ſhe was obliged to fly for her life, leaving her ſhop and goods to the mob, many of which they hacked and hewed with their ſwords, to her no ſmall loſs and damage.

Henry Dunkle, joyner, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That on the 30th of *June*, as he was ſtanding at the widow *Fuller*'s ſhop-window, he ſaw *Butler*, accompanied with a large mob, who ſtopped before her ſhop: that after he had groſsly abuſed her, he made a full ſtroke with his hanger at her head; which muſt have cleft her in two, had not this deponent received the guard of the hanger on his ſhoulder: that preſently after, the ſaid *Butler* ſeized upon this deponent: that he ſeized him by the collar with one hand, and with the other held the hanger over his head, calling him all manner of names, and tearing his ſhirt and cloaths; and that had it not been for the timely aſſiſtance of ſome neighbours, he verily believes he ſhould have been torn in pieces.

Margaret Trimnell, of *Corke*, depoſes,

That

That on the 30th of *June*, *John Auſtin* and *Nicholas Butler*, with a numerous mob, came to her ſhop: that after calling her many names, *Auſtin* ſtruck her with his club on the right arm, ſo that it has been black ever ſince from the ſhoulder to the elbow: that *Butler* came next, and with a great ſtick ſtruck her a violent blow acroſs the back: that many of them then drew their ſwords, which they carried under their coats, and cut and hacked her goods, part of which they threw out into the ſtreet, while others of them threw dirt and ſtones into the ſhop, to the conſiderable damage of her goods and loſs of this deponent.

11. It was not for thoſe who had any regard either to their perſons or goods, to oppoſe Mr. *Butler* after this. So the poor people patiently ſuffered whatever he and his mob were pleaſed to inflict upon them, till the aſſizes drew on, at which they doubted not to find a ſufficient, though late relief.

Accordingly, twenty-eight depoſitions were taken (from the foul copies of ſome of which the preceding account is moſtly tranſcribed) and laid before the grand jury, *Auguſt* 19. But they did not find any one of theſe bills. Inſtead of this, they made that memorable preſentment, which is worthy to be preſerved in the annals of *Ireland*, to all ſucceeding generations.

"We find and preſent *Charles Weſley*, to be a perſon of ill fame, a vagabond, and a common diſturber of his majeſty's peace, and we pray he may be tranſported."

We

We find and preſent *James Williams*, &c.
We find and preſent *Robert Swindle*, &c.
We find and preſent *Jonathan Reeves*, &c.
We find and preſent *James Wheatly*, &c.
We find and preſent *John Larwood*, &c.
We find and preſent *Joſeph McAuliff*, &c.
We find and preſent *Charles Skelton*, &c.
We find and preſent *William Tooker*, &c.
We find and preſent *Daniel Sullivan*, &c.

12. Mr. *Butler* and his mob were now in higher ſpirits than ever. They ſcoured the ſtreets, day and night; frequently hollowing as they went along, "Five pounds for a † Swaddler's head:" their chief declaring to them all, "He had full liberty now, to do whatever he would, even to murder, if he pleaſed, as Mr. *Swain* of *North Abbey*, and others are ready to teſtify."

13. The ſeſſions held at *Corke*, on the 5th of *October* following, produced another memorable preſentment.

"We find and preſent *John Horton*, to be a perſon of ill fame, a vagabond and a common diſturber of his majeſty's peace; and we pray, that he may be tranſported."

But complaint being made of this above, as wholly illegal, it vaniſhed into air.

14. Some time after Mr. *Butler* removed to *Dublin*, and began to ſing his ballads there. But having little ſucceſs, he returned to *Corke*, and in *January* began to ſcour the ſtreets again, purſuing

† A name firſt given to Mr. Cennick, from his firſt preaching on thoſe words, *Ye ſhall find the babe wrapt in ſwaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

ing all *of this way*, with a large mob at his heels, armed with ſwords, ſtaves and piſtols. Complaint was made of this, to *William Holmes*, Eſq; the preſent mayor of *Corke*. But there was no removal of the thing complained of: the riots were not ſuppreſt. Nay, they not only continued, but increaſed.

15. From the beginning of *February* to the end, his majeſty's peace was preſerved juſt as before: of which it may be proper to ſubjoin two or three inſtances, for the information of all thinking men.

William Jewell, clothier, of *Shandon Church-lane*, depoſes,

That *Nicholas Butler*, with a riotous mob, ſeveral times aſſaulted this deponent's houſe: that particularly on the 23d of *February*, he came thither with a large mob, armed with clubs and other weapons: that ſeveral of the rioters entered the houſe, and ſwore, the firſt who reſiſted, they would blow their brains out: that the deponent's wife endeavouring to ſtop them, was aſſaulted and beaten by the ſaid *Butler*; who then ordered his men, to break the deponent's windows, which they did with ſtones of a conſiderable weight.

Mary Philips, of St. *Peter's Church-lane*, depoſes,

That on the 26th of *February*, about ſeven in the evening, *Nicholas Butler* came to her houſe with a large mob, and aſked, where her huſband was? That as ſoon as ſhe appeared, he firſt abuſed her in the groſſeſt terms, and then ſtruck her:

her on the head, ſo that it ſtunned her; and ſhe verily believes, had not ſome within thruſt and faſtened the door, ſhe ſhould have been murdered on the ſpot.

It may ſuffice for the preſent to add one inſtance more:

Elizabeth Gardelet, wife of *Joſeph Gardelet*, corporal, in Col. *Pawlet*'s regiment, Capt. *Charlton*'s company, depoſes,

That on *February* the 28th, as ſhe was going out of her lodgings, ſhe was met by *Butler* and his mob: that *Butler*, without any manner of provocation, immediately fell upon her, ſtriking her with both his fiſts on the ſide of the head, which knocked her head againſt the wall: that ſhe endeavoured to eſcape from him, but he purſued her, and ſtruck her ſeveral times in the face; that ſhe ran into the ſchool-yard for ſhelter, but he followed, and caught hold of her, ſaying, "You whore, you ſtand on conſecrated ground," and threw her with ſuch force acroſs the lane, that ſhe was driven againſt the oppoſite wall: that when ſhe had recovered herſelf a little ſhe made the beſt of her way to her lodging; but *Butler* ſtill purſued, and overtook her as ſhe was going up the ſtairs: that he ſtruck her with his fiſt on the ſtomach, which ſtroke knocked her down backwards; that falling with the ſmall of her back againſt the edge of one of the ſtairs, ſhe was not able to riſe again; that her pains immediately

mediately came upon her, and about two in the morning ſhe miſcarried.

16. Theſe, with ſeveral more depoſitions to the ſame effect, were in *April* laid before the grand-jury. Yet they did not find any of theſe bills! But they found one againſt *Daniel Sullivan*, the younger, (no preacher, but a hearer of the people called *Methodiſts*) who, when *Butler* and his mob were diſcharging a ſhower of ſtones upon him, fired a piſtol, without any ball, over their heads. If any man has wrote this ſtory to *England* in a quite different manner, and fixed it on *a young Methodiſt preacher*, let him be aſhamed in the preſence of God and man—unleſs ſhame and he have ſhook hands and parted.

17. Several of the perſons preſented as vagabonds in autumn, appeared at the lent aſſizes. But none appearing againſt them, they were diſcharged, with honour to themſelves and ſhame to their proſecutors; who by bringing the matter to a judicial determation, plainly ſhewed, there is a law even for *Methodiſts*; and gave his majeſty's judge a full occaſion to declare the utter illegality of all riots, and the inexcuſableneſs of tolerating (much more cauſing) them on any pretence whatſoever.

18. It was now generally believed there would be no more riots in *Corke*: although I cannot ſay that was my opinion. On *May* the 19th, I accepted the repeated invitation of Mr. Alderman *Pembrock*, and came to his houſe. Underſtanding

ing the place where the preaching uſually was, would by no means contain thoſe who deſired to hear me, at eight in the morning I went to *Hammond's Marſh*, the congregation was large and deeply attentive. A few of the rabble gathered at a diſtance; but by little and little they drew near, and mixed with the congregation. So that I have ſeldom ſeen a more quiet and orderly aſſembly at any church in *England* or *Ireland*.

19. In the afternoon a report being ſpread abroad, that the mayor deſigned to hinder my preaching on the *Marſh*; I deſired Mr. *Skelton* and *Jones* to wait upon him, and inquire concerning it. Mr. *Skelton* aſked, if my preaching there would be offenſive to him? Adding, "If it would, Mr. *W.* would not do it." He replied warmly, "Sir, I will have no mobbing." Mr. *S.* ſaid, "Sir, there was none this morning." He anſwered, "There was. Are there not churches and meetings enough? I will have no more mobs and riots." Mr. *S.* replied, "Sir, neither Mr. *W.* nor they that heard him made either mobs or riots." He anſwered plain, I *will have* no more preaching. And if Mr. *W.* attempts to preach, I am prepared for him.

I did not conceive till now, that there was any real meaning in what a gentleman ſaid ſome time ſince; who being told, "Sir, king *George* tolerates *Methodiſts*," replied, "Sir, you ſhall find, the mayor is king of *Corke*."

20. I

20. I began preaching in our own houſe ſoon after five. Mr. Mayor mean time was walking in the 'change, where he gave orders to the drummers of the town, and to his ſerjeants,—— doubtleſs to go down and keep the peace! They came down with an innumerable mob to the houſe. They continued drumming, and I continued preaching till I had finiſhed my diſcourſe. When I came out, the mob immediately cloſed me in. I deſired one of the ſerjeants to protect me from the mob; but he replied, "Sir, I have no orders to do that." When I came into the ſtreet they threw whatever came to hand. I walked on ſtraight through the midſt of them, looking every man in the face, and they opened to the right and left till I came near *Dant's-bridge*. A large party had taken poſſeſſion of this, one of whom was bawling out, "Now, high for the *Romans!*" When I came up, theſe likewiſe ſhrunk back, and I walked through them into Mr. *Jenkins*'s houſe.

But many of the congregation were more roughly handled; particularly Mr. *Jones*, who was covered with dirt, and eſcaped with his life almoſt by miracle. The main body of the mob then went to the houſe, brought out all the ſeats and benches, tore up the floor, the door, the frames of the windows, and whatever of woodwork remained, part of which they carried off for their own uſe, and the reſt they burnt in the open ſtreet.

21. *Monday*

21. *Monday* the 21ſt, I rode on to *Bandon*. From three in the afternoon, till after ſeven, the mob of *Corke* marched in grand proceſſion, and then burnt me in effigy near *Dant's-bridge*.

Tueſday 22. The mob and drummers were moving again between three and four in the morning. The ſame evening the mob came down to *Hammond's Marſh*, but ſtood at a diſtance from Mr. *Stockdale*'s houſe, till the drums beat, and the mayor's ſerjeants beckoned to them, on which they drew up and began to attack. The mayor being ſent for, came with a party of ſoldiers. Mr. *Stockdale* earneſtly deſired, that he would diſperſe the mob, or at leaſt leave the ſoldiers there to protect them from the rioters. But he took them all away with him; on which the mob went on, and broke all the glaſs and moſt of the window frames in pieces.

22. *Wedneday* 23. The mob was ſtill patrolling the ſtreets, abuſing all that were called *Methodiſts*. And threatening to murder them, and pull down their houſes if they did not leave *this way*.

Thurſday 24. They again aſſaulted Mr. *Stockdale*'s houſe, broke down the boards he had nailed up againſt the windows, deſtroyed what little remained of the window-frames and ſhutters, and damaged a conſiderable part of his goods.

Friday 25, and again on *Saturday* 26, one *Roger O'Ferrall* fixed up an advertiſement at the public

public exchange, (as he had alſo done for ſeveral days before) "That he was ready to head any mob, in order to pull down any houſe that ſhould dare to harbour a *Swaddler*."

23. *Sunday* 27, I wrote the following letter to the mayor:

Mr. Mayor,

AN hour ago I received "a letter to Mr. *Butler*," juſt re-printed at *Corke*. The publiſhers aſſert, "It was brought down from *Dublin* to be diſtributed among the ſociety. But Mr. *Weſley* called in as many as he could." Both theſe aſſertions are abſolutely falſe. I read ſome lines of that letter when I was in *Dublin*, but never read it over before this morning. Who the author of it is I know not. But this I know; I never called in one; neither concerned myſelf about it; much leſs brought any down to diſtribute among the ſociety.

Yet I cannot but return my hearty thanks to the gentlemen who have diſtributed them through the town. I believe it will do more good than they are ſenſible of. For though I diſlike its condemning the magiſtrates and clergy in general, (ſeveral of whom were not concerned in the late proceedings) yet I think the reaſoning is ſtrong and clear. And that the facts referred to therein,

therein, are not at all misrepresented, will sufficiently appear in due time.

I fear God and honour the king. I earnestly desire to be at peace with all men. I have not willingly given any offence, either to the magistrates, the clergy, or any of the inhabitants of the city of *Corke*, neither do I desire any thing of them, but to be treated (I will not say, as a clergyman, a gentleman, or a Christian) but with such justice and humanity as are due, to a *Jew*, a *Turk*, or a *Pagan*. I am,

SIR,

Your obedient servant,

J. WESLEY.

II. 1. Your performance is dated, *May* 28th, the most material parts of which I am now to consider.

It contains, first, a charge against the Methodist preachers, secondly, a defence of the corporation and clergy of *Corke*.

With regard to your charge against those preachers, may I take the liberty to inquire, why you drop six out of the eleven that have been at *Corke*, *viz.* Mr. *Swindells*, *Wheatly*, *Larwood*, *Skelton*, *Tucker*, and *Haughton?* can you glean up no story concerning these? Or is it out of mere compassion that you spare them?

2. But before I proceed, I must beg leave to ask, who is this evidence against the other five? Why, one that neither dares shew his face, nor tell

tell his name, or the place of his abode: one that is aſhamed (and truly not without cauſe) of the dirty work he is employed in: ſo that we could not even conjecture who he was but that his ſpeech bewrayeth him. How much credit is due to ſuch an evidence, let any man of reaſon judge.

3. This worthy witneſs falls foul upon † Mr. *Cownly*, and miſerably murders a tale he has got by the end. Sir, Mr. *M.* is nothing obliged to you, for bringing the character of his niece into queſtion. He is perfectly ſatisfied that Mr. *C.* acted in that whole affair, with the ſtricteſt regard both to honour and conſcience.

You next aver, that Mr. *Reeves* ‡ *aſked a young woman*, "*Whether ſhe had a mind to go to hell with her father?*" 'Tis poſſible. I will neither deny nor affirm it without ſome better proof. But ſuppoſe he did; unleſs I know the circumſtances of the cauſe I could not ſay, whether he ſpoke right or wrong.

4. But what is this to the § *Monſtrous, ſhocking, amazing blaſphemy, ſpoken by Mr.* Charles Weſley? *Who one day*, you ſay, *preaching on* Hammond's Marſh, *called out*, "*Has any of you got the Spirit? And when none anſwered, ſaid I am ſure ſome of you have got it: for I feel virtue go out of me.*" Sir, do you expect any one to believe this ſtory? I doubt it will not paſs even at *Corke*—— Unleſs with your wife friend, who ſaid

† p. 13. ‡ p. 16. § p. 18.

ſaid " *Methodiſts?* Ay, they are the people who place all their religion, in wearing long whiſkers."

5. In the ſame page you attack Mr. *Williams*, for applying thoſe words, *I thy Maker am thy huſband.* Sir, by the ſame rule that you conclude *theſe expreſſions could only flow from a mind full of laſcivious ideas*, you may conclude the 45th pſalm, to be only a wanton ſonnet, and the canticles a counterpart to *Rocheſter*'s poems.

But you ſay, he likewiſe † *made uſe of unwarrantable expreſſions, particularly with regard to faith and good works. And the next day denied that he had uſed them.* Sir, your word is not proof of this. Be pleaſed to produce proper vouchers of the facts: and I will then give a farther anſwer.

Likewiſe, as to his *indecent and irreverent behaviour at church, turning all the preacher ſaid into ridicule, ſo that numbers aſked in your hearing, why the church-wardens did not put the profane, wicked ſcoundrel in the ſtocks?* My preſent anſwer is, I doubt the facts. Will your *men of undoubted character* be ſo good as to atteſt them?

6. Of all theſe, Mr. *Williams*, *Cownly*, *Reeves*, *Haughton*, *Larwood*, *Skelton*, *Swindells*, *Tucker* and *Wheatley*, you pronounce in the lump, that they are ‡ *a parcel of vagabond, illiterate babblers.* Of whom *every body that has the leaſt ſhare of reaſon muſt know*, that though *they amuſe the populace*

† p. 10, 11. ‡ p. 3, 4.

with nonſenſe, ribaldry and blaſphemy, they are not capable of writing orthography or good ſenſe. Sir, that is not an adjudged caſe. Some who have a little ſhare of reaſon, think they are capable both of ſpeaking and writing good ſenſe. But if they are not, if they cannot write or read, they can ſave ſouls from death: they can, by the grace of God, bring ſinners from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

7. But they † *made a woman plunder her poor, old huſband, and another abſent herſelf from her huſband and children.* Pray, what are their names? Where do they live? And how may one come to the ſpeech of them? I have heard ſo many plauſible tales of this kind, which on examination vaniſhed away, that I cannot believe one word of this, till I have more proof than your bare aſſertion.

8. So far I have been pleading for others. But I am now called to anſwer for myſelf. For ‡*Theophilus*, and *John Weſley*, ſay you, *ſeem to me the ſame individual perſon.* They may ſeem ſo to you: but not to any who knows either my ſtile or manner of writing. Beſides, if it had been mine, it would have borne my name. For I do not love fighting in the dark.

But were not *a great number* of thoſe books *brought from* Dublin, *to be diſperſed throughout the city?* Not by me. Not by my order; nor, to my

† p. 24, 25. ‡ P. 4.

my knowledge. However I thank you again, for diſperſing them.

9. But § *while charity ſtands in the front of Chriſtian graces, the author of ſuch a book can have none of that grace. For you muſt allow the vulgar to think.* Mal-a-propo enough, a lively ſaying. But for any uſe it is of, it may ſtand either in the front or rear of the ſentence.

The argument itſelf is ſomething new. A man knocks me down. I cry, "Help! Help, or I ſhall be murdered." He replies, "While charity ſtands in the front of Chriſtian graces, the author of ſuch a cry can have none of that grace."

So now you have ſhewn to all the world, *the uncharitable and conſequently unchriſtian ſpirit of Methodiſm.* What? Becauſe the Methodiſts cry out for help, before you have quite beat out their brains?

What grimace is this? His majeſty's quiet, loyal, proteſtant ſubjects are abuſed, inſulted, outraged, beaten, covered with dirt, rolled in the mire, bruiſed, wounded with ſwords and hangers, murdered, have their houſes broke open, their goods deſtroyed, or carried away before their face: and all this in open day, in the face of the ſun, yet without any remedy! And thoſe who treat them thus are *charitable* men! Brimfull of a *Chriſtian* ſpirit! But if they who are ſo treated appeal to the common ſenſe and reaſon of man-

§ p. 26.

kind, you gravely cry, *See the uncharitable, the unchriſtian ſpirit of Methodiſm!*

10. You proceed. *But pray, what are thoſe facts, which you ſay are not miſrepreſented? Do you mean, that* Butler *was hired and paid by the corporation and clergy?* Or, *that this* remarkable loyal *city, is diſaffected to the preſent government?* And that *a papiſt was ſupported, nay, hired by the chief magiſtrates, to walk the ſtreets, threatening bloodſhed and murder? Declare openly, whether theſe are the facts.* Sir, I underſtand you well. But for the preſent, I beg to be excuſed. There is a time and a place for all things.

* 11. I rejoice to hear the city of *Corke* is ſo *remarkably loyal!* So entirely *well-affected to the preſent government.* I preſume you mean this chiefly of *The Friendly Society*, (in whom the power of the city is now lodged) erected ſome time ſince, in oppoſition to that body of Jacobites, commonly called, *The* Hanover *Club.* I ſuppoſe that zealous Anti-methodiſt, who ſome days ago, ſtabbed the Methodiſt-preacher in the ſtreet, and then cried out, "Damn king *George* and all his armies!" Did this as a ſpecimen of his *eminent loyalty.*

* It cannot be denied, that this loyal ſubject of king *George (Simon Rawlins* by name) was upon oath made of thoſe words, committed to goal, on *May* the 31ſt. And it was not till ſix days after, that he walked in proceſſion through the town, with drums beating, and colours flying, and declared

declared at the head of his mob, " He would never reſt, till he had driven all theſe *falſe prophets* out of *Corke*." How ſincere they were in their good wiſhes to king *George* and his armies, they gave a clear proof the tenth of this inſtant, *June:* when, as ten or twelve ſoldiers were walking along, in a very quiet and inoffenſive manner, the mob fell upon them, ſwore they would have their lives, knocked them down, and beat them to ſuch a degree, that on *June* the 12th, one of them died of his wounds, and another was not then expected to live many hours.

12. But you have more proofs of my uncharitableneſs, that is, ſuppoſing I am the author of that pamphlet. For you read there, " Riches, eaſe and honour, are what the clergy ſet their hearts upon. But the ſouls for whom Chriſt died, they leave to the tender mercies of hell." Sir, Can you deny it? Is it not true? Literally true, concerning ſome of the clergy? You aſk, † *But ought we to condemn all, for the faults of a few?* I anſwer, No; no more than I will condemn all, in the affair of *Corke*, for the faults of a few. It is you that do this. And if it were as you ſay, if they were all *concerned* in the late proceedings, then it would be no uncharitableneſs to ſay, " They were in a miſerable ſtate indeed " Then they would doubtleſs be " kicking againſt the pricks, contending with heaven, fighting againſt God."

† p. 20.

13. I come now to the general charge againſt me independent on the letter to Mr. *Butler*. And 1ſt. You charge me with † *a frontleſs aſſurance, and a well diſſembled hypocriſy*. Sir, I thank you. This is as kind, as if you was to call me (with Mr. *Williams*) *a profane, wicked ſcoundrel*. I am not careful to anſwer in this matter: ſhortly we ſhall both ſtand at an higher bar.

14. You charge me, ſecondly, with being an ‡ *harebrained enthuſiaſt*. Sir, I am your moſt obedient ſervant.

But you will prove me an enthuſiaſt. *For* § *you ſay* (thoſe are your words) *you are ſent of God to inform mankind*, of ſome *other revelation of his will*, than *what has been left by Chriſt and his apoſtles*. Not ſo. I never ſaid any ſuch thing. When I do this, then call for miracles. But at preſent your demand is quite unreaſonable. There is no room for it at all. What I advance, I prove by the words of Chriſt, or his apoſtles. If not, let it fall to the ground.

15. You charge me, thirdly, with being employed in ‖ *promoting the cauſe of arbitrary popiſh power*. Sir, I plead not guilty. Produce your witneſſes. Prove this and I will allow all the reſt.

* You charge me fourthly, with holding ¶ *Midnight aſſemblies*. Sir, did you never ſee the word *Vigil* in your common prayer book? Do you know what it means? If not, permit me tell you, that it was cuſtomary with the antient Chriſtians,

† p. 22. ‡ p. 7. § p. 28. ‖ p. 7. ¶ p. 24.

Chriſtians, to ſpend whole nights in prayer: and that theſe nights were termed *Vigiliæ* or *Vigils*. Therefore for ſpending a part of ſome nights in this manner, in public and ſolemn prayer, we have not only the authority of our own national church, but of the univerſal church, in the earlieſt ages.

16. You charge me, fifthly with § *being the cauſe of all that* Butler *has done*. True; juſt as *Latimer* and *Ridley* (if I may dare to name myſelf with thoſe venerable men) were the cauſe of all that biſhop *Bonner* did. In this ſenſe, the charge is true. It has pleaſed God (unto him be all the glory) even by my preaching or writings, to convince ſome of the old Chriſtian ſcriptural doctrine, which till then they knew not. And while they declared this to others, you ſhewed them the ſame love, as *Edmund* of *London* did to their foreſathers. Only the expreſſions of your love, were not quite the ſame; becauſe (bleſſed be God) you had not the ſame power.

17. You affirm, ſixthly, that I † *rob and plunder the poor, ſo as to leave them neither bread to eat, nor rayment to put on*. An heavy charge, but without all colour of truth. Yea, juſt the reverſe is true. Abundance of thoſe in *Corke*, *Bandon*, *Limerick*, *Dublin*, as well as in all parts of *England*, who a few years ago, either through ſloth or profaneneſs, had not bread to eat, or rayment to put on, have now by means of the

§ p. 17. † p. 8.

preachers called *Methodiſts*, a ſufficiency of both. Since by hearing theſe, they have learned to fear God, they have learned alſo to work with their hands, as well as to cut off every needleſs expence, to be good ſtewards of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs.

18. You aſſert, ſeventhly, that I am † *myſelf as fond of riches, as the moſt worldly clergyman. Two ‡ thouſand pence a week! A fine yearly revenue from aſſurance and ſalvation-tickets!* I anſwer, 1. What do you mean by *aſſurance and ſalvation-tickets?* Is not the very expreſſion a mixture of nonſenſe and blaſphemy? 2. How ſtrangely did you under-rate my revenue, when you wrote in the perſon of *George Fiſher?* You then allowed me only an hundred pounds a year? What is this to two thouſand pence a week? 3. § *There is not a clergyman*, you ſay, *who would not willingly exchange his livings, for your yearly penny contributions.* And no wonder. For according to a late computation, they amount to no leſs every year, than eight hundred, eighty ſix thouſand pounds, beſide ſome odd ſhillings and pence: In compariſon of which the revenue of his grace of *Armagh*. or of *Canterbury*, is a very trifle. And yet, Sir, ſo great is my regard for you and my gratitude for your late ſervices, that if you will only reſign your curacy of *Chriſt's Church*, I will make over to you my whole revenue in *Ireland*.

19. But

† p. 21. ‡ p. 8. § p. 21.

19. But *the honour* I gain, you think is even *greater than profit.* Alas, Sir, I have not generoſity enough to reliſh it, I was always of *Juvenal*'s mind,

Gloria quantalibet, quid erit ſi gloria tantum?

And eſpecially, while there are ſo many drawbacks, ſo many dead flies in the pot of ointment. Sheer honour might taſte tolerably well. But there is gall with the honey, and leſs of the honey than the gall. Pray, Sir, what think *you?* Have I more honour, or diſhonour? Do more people praiſe or blame me? How is it in *Corke?* Nay, (to go no farther) among your own little circle of acquaintance? Where you hear one commend, do not ten cry out, "Away with ſuch a fellow from the earth!"

Above all, I do not love honour with dry blows. I do not find it will cure broken bones. But perhaps you may think, I glory in theſe. O how ſhould I have gloried then, if your good friends at *Dant's-bridge* had burnt my perſon, inſtead of my effigy?

We are here to ſet religion out of the queſtion. You do not ſuppoſe, I have any thing to do with that. Why if ſo, I ſhould rather leave *you* the honour, and myſelf ſleep in a whole ſkin. On that ſuppoſition I quite agree with the epigrammatiſt,

Virgilii in tumulo, divini præmia vatis,
Explicat en viridem laurea læt a comam.
Quid te defunctum juvat hæc? Felicior olim
Sub patulæ fagi tegmine vivus eras.

20. Your laſt charge is, † That *I profeſs myſelf to be a member of the eſtabliſhed church, and yet act contrary to the commands of my ſpritual governors, and ſtab the church to the very vitals.* I anſwer, 1. What *ſpiritual governor* has commanded me not to preach, in any part of his majeſty's dominions? I know not one, to this very day, either in *England* or *Ireland.* 2. What is it, to ſtab the church to the very vitals? Why to deny her fundamental doctrines. And do I, or you, do this? Let any who has read her liturgy, articles and homilies judge, which of us two denies, "That we are juſtified by faith alone?" That every believer has "the inſpiration of God's Holy Spirit?" That all who are ſtrong in faith, do "perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name?" He that denies this is *the treacherous ſon, who ſtabs this affectionate and tender mother.*

If you deny it, you have already diſowned the church. But as for me I neither can nor will; though I know you ſincerely deſire I ſhould.

Hoc Ithacus velit & magno mercentur achivi.

But

† p. 27.

But I chuſe to ſtay in the church, were it only to reprove thoſe who *betray* her *with a kiſs.*

21. I come now to your defence of the corporation and clergy. But ſure ſuch a defence was never ſeen before. For whereas I had ſaid, I *diſlike the condemning the magiſtrates or clerg* in general, becauſe *ſeveral of them* (ſo I charitably ſuppoſed) *were not concerned in the late proceedings:* you anſwer, † "*Pray by all means point them out, that they may be diſtinguiſhed by ſome mark of honour above their brethren.*" What do you mean? If you mean any thing at all, it muſt be that they were *all concerned in the late proceedings.* Sir, if they were (of which I own, you are a better judge than I) was it needful to declare this to all the world? Eſpecially, in ſo plain terms as theſe? Did not your zeal here a little outrun your wiſdom?

22. But ‡ *the magiſtrate*, you ſay, was only *endeavouring to ſecure the peace of the city.* A very extraordinary way of ſecuring peace! Truly Sir, I cannot yet believe, not even on your word, that *all* ‖ *the magiſtrates except one* were concerned, in *this method* of ſecuring peace. Much leſs can I believe, that *all the clergy* were concerned in thus *endeavouring to bring back their flock led aſtray by theſe hirelings* (an unlucky word) *into the right fold.*

23. Of the clergy you add, *What* § *need have they to rage and foam* at your preaching? *Suppoſe*

† p. 29, 30. ‡ p. 6. ‖ p. 29, 30. § p. 7.

you could delude the greater part of their flocks, this could not affect their temporal intereſt. We do not deſire it ſhould. We only deſire, to *delude* all mankind (if you will term it a deluſion) into a ſerious concern for their eternal intereſt, for a treaſure which none can take away.

Having now both ſtated the facts to which you referred, and conſidered the moſt material parts of your performance, I have only to ſubjoin a few obvious reflections, naturally ariſing from a view of thoſe uncommon occurrences; partly with regard to the motives of thoſe who were active therein; partly to their manner of acting.

With regard to the former, every reaſonable man, will naturally inquire, on what motives could any, either of the clergy or the corporation, ever think of oppoſing that preaching, by which ſo many notoriouſly vicious men have been brought to an eminently virtuous life and converſation?

* You ſupply us yourſelf with one unexceptionable anſwer, † *Thoſe of the clergy with whom I have converſed, freely own, they have not learning ſufficient to comprehend your ſcheme of religion.* If they have not, I am ſorry for them. My ſcheme of religion is this. Love is the fulfilling of the law. From the true love of God and man, directly flows every Chriſtian grace, every holy and happy temper: and from theſe ſpring uniform holineſs of converſation, in conformity

† p. 30.

conformity to thoſe great rules, whether ye eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God: and, whatſoever you would that men ſhould do unto you, even ſo do unto them. But this you ſay, *thoſe of the clergy with whom you converſe, have not learning enough to comprehend.* Conſequently *their* ignorance, or not underſtanding our doctrine, is the reaſon why they oppoſe us.

2. I learn from you, that ignorance of another kind, is a ſecond reaſon why ſome of the clergy oppoſe us. They (like you) think us *enemies to the church.* The natural conſequence is, that in proportion to their zeal for the church, their zeal againſt us will be.

3. The zeal which many of them have for orthodoxy, or right opinions, is a third reaſon for oppoſing us. For they judge us heterodox in ſeveral points, maintainers of ſtrange opinions. And the truth is, the old doctrines of the reformation are now quite new in the world. Hence thoſe who revive them cannot fail to be oppoſed by thoſe of the clergy who know them not.

4. Fourthly, Their honour is touched, when others pretend to know what they do not know themſelves; eſpecially when unlearned and (otherwiſe) ignorant men, lay claim to any ſuch knowlege. *What is the tendency of all this* (as you obſerve on another head) *but to work in men's minds a mean opinion of the clergy?* But who can tamely

tamely suffer this? None but those who have the mind that was in *Christ Jesus*.

5. Again, Will not some say, "Master, by thus *acting*, thou reproachest us?" By preaching sixteen or eighteen times a week? And by a thousand other things of the same kind? Is not this, in effect, reproaching us, as if we were lazy and indolent? As if we had not a sufficient love to the souls of those committed to our charge?

6. May there not likewise be some (perhaps unobserved) envy, in the breast even of men that fear God? How much more in them that do not? When they hear of the great success of these preachers, of the esteem and honour that are paid to them by the people, and the immense riches which they acquire. What wonder if this occasions a zeal which is not the flame of fervent love?

7. Add to this, a desire in some of the inferior clergy of pleasing their superiors; supposing these (which is no impossible supposition) are first influenced by any of these motives. Add the imprudence of some that hear those preachers, and (perhaps) needlessly provoke their parochial ministers. And when all these things are considered, none need be at a loss for the motives on which many of the clergy have opposed us.

* 8. But from what motives can any of the corporation oppose us? I must beg the gentlemen of this body to observe, that I dare by no means lump

lump them all together, as their awkward defender has done. But this I may say without offence, there are some even among *you* who are not so remarkably loyal as others, not so eminently well-affected to the present government. Now these cannot but observe, (gentlemen, I speak plain, for I am to deliver my own soul in the sight of God) that wherever we preach, many who were his enemies before, became zealous friends to his majesty. The instances glare both in *England* and *Ireland*. Those therefore who are not so zealously his friends, have a strong motive to oppose us; though it cannot be expected they should own this to be the motive on which they act.

9. Others may have been prejudiced by the artful misrepresentations these have made, or by those they have frequently heard from the pulpit. Indeed this has been the grand fountain of popular prejudice. In every part both of *England* and *Ireland*, the clergy, where they were inclined so to do, have most effectually stirred up the people.

10. There has been another reason assigned for the opposition that was made to me in particular at *Corke*, viz. "That the mayor was offended at my preaching on *Hammond's Marsh*, and therefore resolved I should not preach at all: whereas, if I had not preached abroad, he would have given me leave to preach in the house." Would Mr. Mayor have given me leave to preach in my

own

own houſe? I return him moſt humble thanks. But ſhould he be ſo courteous as to make me the offer even now, I ſhould not accept it on any ſuch terms. Greater men than he have endeavoured to hinder me from calling ſinners to repentance in that open and public manner. But hitherto it has been all loſt labour. They have never yet been able to prevail. Nor ever will, till they can *conquer* king *George and his armies*. To *curſe* them is not enough.

* 11. Laſtly, Some (I hope but a few) do cordially believe, that "private vices are public benefits." I myſelf heard this in *Corke*, when I was there laſt. Theſe conſequently think us the deſtroyers of their city, by ſo leſſening the number of their public benefactors, the gluttons, the drunkards, the dram-drinkers, the ſabbath-breakers, the common-ſwearers, the cheats of every kind, and the followers of that antient and *honourable* trade, adultery and fornication.

12. Theſe are the undeniable motives to this oppoſition. I come now to the manner of it.

When ſome gentlemen inquired of one of the biſhops in *England*, "My lord, what muſt we do to ſtop theſe new preachers?" He anſwered, "If they preach contrary to ſcripture, confute them by ſcripture; if contrary to reaſon, confute them by reaſon. But beware you uſe no other weapons than theſe, either in oppoſing error, or defending the truth."

Would to God this rule had been followed at

Corke.

Corke. But how little has it been thought of there? The oppoſition was begun with lies of all kinds, frequently delivered in the name of God. So that never was any thing ſo ill judged as for *you* to aſk, *Does Chriſtianity encourage its profeſſors to make uſe of lies, invectives, or low, mean and abuſive ſcurrility, to carry on its intereſt?* No, ſir, it does not. I diſclaim and abhor every weapon of this kind. But with theſe have the *Methodiſt* preachers been oppoſed, in *Corke* above any other place. In *England*, in all *Ireland*, have I neither heard nor read any like thoſe groſs, palpable *lies*, thoſe *low*, Billingſgate *invectives*, and that inexpreſſibly *mean abuſe* and baſe *ſcurrility*, which the oppoſers of *Methodiſm*, ſo called, have continually made uſe of, and which has been the ſtrength of their cauſe from the beginning.

13. If it be not ſo, let the Right Rev. the Lord Biſhop of *Corke* (for he too has openly entered the liſts againſt the *Methodiſts*) the Rev. Dr. *Tiſdale*, or any other whom his lordſhip ſhall appoint, meet me on even ground, writing as a gentleman to a gentleman, a ſcholar to a ſcholar, a clergyman to a clergyman. Let him thus ſhew me wherein I have preached or written amiſs, and I will ſtand reproved before all the world.

14. But let not his lordſhip, or any other, continue to put *perſecution* in the place of reaſon: either *private perſecution*, ſtirring up huſbands to threaten or beat their wives, parents their

their children, maſters their ſervants; gentlemen to ruin their tenants, labourers or tradeſmen, by turning them out of their farms or cottages, employing, or buying of them no more, becauſe they worſhip God according to their own conſcience: or open, bareſaced, noonday, *Corke-perſecution*, breaking open the houſes of his majeſty's proteſtant ſubjects, deſtroying their goods, ſpoiling or tearing the very cloaths from their backs; ſtriking, bruiſing, wounding, murdering them in the ſtreets; dragging them through the mire, without any regard to age or ſex; not ſparing even thoſe of tender years; no nor women, though great with child; but with more than Pagan or Mahometan barbarity, deſtroying infants that were yet unborn.

15. Ought theſe things ſo to be? Are they right before God or man? Are they to the honour of our nation? I appeal unto *Cæſar*; unto his gracious majeſty king *George*, and to the governors under him both in *England* and *Ireland*. I appeal to all true, diſintereſted lovers of this their native country. Is this the way to make it a flouriſhing nation? Happy at home, amiable and honourable abroad? Men of *Ireland* judge! Nay, and is there not ſome weight in that additional conſideration, that this is not a concern of a private nature, rather is it not a common cauſe?

If the dams are once broken down, if you tamely give up the fundamental laws of your country,

country, if these are openly violated in the case of your fellow-subjects, how soon may the case be your own. For what protection then have any of you left, for either your liberty or property? What security for either your goods or lives, if a riotous mob is to be both judge, jury, and executioner?

16. *Protestants*, what is become of that liberty of conscience for which your forefathers spent their blood? Is it not an empty shadow, a mere, unmeaning name, if these things are suffered among you? *Romans*, such of you as are calm and candid men, do *you* approve of these proceedings? I cannot think you yourselves would use such methods of convincing us, if we think amiss. *Christians* of all denominations, can you reconcile this to our royal law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?* O tell it not in *Gath!* Let it not be named among those who are enemies to the Christian cause! Lest that worthy name whereby we are called, be still more blasphemed among the Heathen!

A LETTER

A

LETTER

To the REVEREND DOCTOR

CONYERS MIDDLETON,

Occaſioned by his late FREE ENQUIRY.

January 4, 1748-9.

REVEREND SIR,

1. IN your late *enquiry*, you endeavour to prove, firſt, That there were no miracles wrought in the primitive church; ſecondly, That all the primitive fathers were fools or knaves, and moſt of them both one and the other. And it is eaſy to obſerve, the whole tenor of your argument tends to prove; thirdly, That no miracles were

were wrought by *Chriſt* or his apoſtles; and fourthly, That thoſe too were fools or knaves, or both.

2. I am not agreed with you on any of theſe heads. My reaſons I ſhall lay before you, in as free a manner (though not in ſo ſmooth or laboured language) as you have laid yours before the world.

3. But I have neither inclination nor leiſure to follow you ſtep by ſtep through three hundred and ſeventy-three quarto pages. I ſhall therefore ſet aſide all I find in your work which does not touch the merits of the cauſe: and likewiſe contract the queſtion itſelf to the three firſt centuries. For I have no more to do with the writers or miracles of the fourth, than with thoſe of the fourteenth century.

4. You will naturally aſk, "Why do you ſtop there? What reaſon can you give for this? If you allow miracles before the empire became Chriſtian, why not afterwards too?" I anſwer, becauſe *after the empire became Chriſtian* (they are your own words) *a general corruption both of faith and morals infected the Chriſtian church: which by that revolution, as St.* Jerom *ſays*, "*loſt as much of her virtue, as it had gained of wealth and power.*"† And this very reaſon St. *Chryſoſtom* himſelf gave in the words you have afterwards cited; "*There are ſome who aſk, Why are not*

☞ Dr. *Middleton*'s words are generally printed in *Italic*.

† Page 123.

not miracles performed ſtill? Why are there no perſons who raiſe the dead, and cure diſeaſes?" To which he replies, " That it was owing to the want of faith, and virtue, and piety in thoſe times."

1. You begin your *preface* by obſerving, that *the enquiry was intended to have been publiſhed* ſome time ago; but upon reflection, you reſolved to *give out firſt, ſome ſketch of what you was projecting:*† and accordingly, *publiſhed the introductory diſcourſe* by itſelf, though *foreſeeing it would encounter all the oppoſition, that prejudice, bigotry, and ſuperſtition are ever prepared to give to all enquiries* ‡ of this nature. But it was your *comfort, that this would excite candid enquirers to weigh the merit and conſequences of it.*§

2. The conſequences of it are tolerably plain, even to free the good people of *England* from all that *prejudice, bigotry, and ſuperſtition*, vulgarly called Chriſtianity. But it is not ſo plain, that *this is the ſole expedient which can ſecure the proteſtant religion againſt the efforts of* Rome.‖ It may be doubted, whether deiſm is the *ſole expedient* to ſecure us againſt popery. For ſome are of opinion, there are perſons in the world who are neither Deiſts nor Papiſts.

3. You open the cauſe artfully enough, by a quotation from Mr. *Locke.*¶ But we are agreed to build our faith on no man's authority. His reaſons will be conſidered in their place.

Thoſe

† Preface, page 1. ‡ Page 2. § Page 3. ‖ Ibid. ¶ Page 4.

Thoſe who have written againſt his and your *opinion*, you ſay, *have ſhewn great eagerneſs, but little knowledge of the queſtion: urged by the hopes of honours, and prepared to fight for every eſtabliſhment, that offers ſuch pay to its defenders*†." I have not read one of theſe: yet I would fain believe, that neither the hope of honour, nor the deſire of pay, was the ſole or indeed the main motive that urged either them or you to engage in writing.

But I grant, they are overſeen, if they argue againſt you, by citing *the teſtimonies of the antient fathers*‡: ſeeing they might eaſily perceive you pay no more regard to theſe, than to the evangeliſts or apoſtles. Neither do I commend them if they *inſinuate jealouſies of conſequences dangerous to Chriſtianity* §. Why they ſhould inſinuate theſe, I cannot conceive: I need not inſinuate, that the ſun ſhines at noon-day. You have *opened too great a glare to the public*‖, to leave them any room for ſuch inſinuation. Though (to ſave appearances) you gravely declare ſtill, *Were my argument allowed to be true, the credit of the goſpel-miracles could not in any degree be ſhaken by it* ¶.

4. So far is flouriſh. Now we come to the point, *The preſent queſtion*, you ſay, *depends on the joint credibility of the facts, and of the witneſſes who atteſt them, eſpecially* on the former. For *if the facts be incredible, no teſtimony can alter the*

† p. 5. ‡ p. 6. § ibid. ‖ p. 7. ¶ p. 6.

the nature of things†. All this is moſt true. You go on. *The credibility of facts lies open to the trial of our reaſon and ſenſes. But the credibility of witneſſes depends on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us. And though in many caſes it may reaſonably be preſumed, yet in none can it be certainly known* ‡. Sir, will you retract this or defend it? If you defend, and can prove, as well as aſſert it, then farewell the credit of all hiſtory, not only ſacred but profane. If *the credibility of witneſſes* (of all witneſſes; for you make no diſtinction) depends, as you peremtorily affirm, on a variety of principles *wholly concealed from us*; and conſequently, though it may be preſumed in many caſes, yet can be certainly known in none: then it is plain, all the hiſtory of the bible is utterly precarious and uncertain: then I may indeed *preſume*, but cannot *certainly know*, that *Jeſus of Nazareth* ever was born; much leſs that he healed the ſick, and raiſed either *Lazarus* or himſelf from the dead. Now, Sir, go and declare again, how careful you are, for *the credit of the goſpel-miracles!*

5. But for fear any (conſidering how *frank and open* your nature is, and how *warmly diſpoſed to ſpeak what you take to be true* §) ſhould fancy you meant what you ſaid in this declaration, you take care to inform them ſoon after: *The whole which the wit of man can poſſibly diſcover, either of the ways*

† p. 9. ‡ p. 10. § p. 7.

ways or will of the Creator, muſt be acquired by attending ſeriouſly (To what? To the *Jewiſh or Chriſtian* revelation? No: but) *to that revelation which he made of himſelf from the beginning, in the beautiful fabric of this viſible world.*§

6. I believe your opponents will not hereafter urge you, either with *that paſſage from St. Mark*, or any other from ſcripture. At leaſt, I will not; unleſs I forget myſelf; as I obſerve you have done juſt now. For you ſaid but now, *before we proceed to examine teſtimonies for the deciſion of this diſpute, our firſt care ſhould be, to inform ourſelves of the nature of thoſe miraculous powers, which are the ſubject of it, as they are repreſented to us in the hiſtory of the goſpel*‖. Very true; *This ſhould be our firſt care.* I was therefore all attention to hear your account of *the nature of thoſe powers, as they are repreſented to us in the goſpel.* But alas! You ſay not a word more about it; but ſlip away to thoſe *zealous champions, who have attempted* (bold men as they are) *to refute the introductory diſcourſe*¶.

Perhaps you will ſay, "Yes, I repeat that text from St. *Mark*." You do; yet not deſcribing the nature of thoſe powers; but only to open the way to *one of your antagoniſts* †; of whom you yourſelf affirm, that *not one of them ſeems to have ſpent a thought in conſidering thoſe powers as they are ſet forth in the New Teſtament*‡. Conſequently, the bare repeating that text, does not

§ p. 22. ‖ p. 10. ¶ p. 11. † p. 12. ‡ p. 11.

prove you (any more than them) to have *ſpent one thought upon the ſubject.*

7. From this antagoniſt you ramble away to another§; after a long citation from whom, you ſubjoin, *It being agreed then, that in the original promiſe, there is no intimation of any particular period, to which their continuance was limited*‖.— Sir, you have loſt your way. We have as yet nothing to do with their *continuance. For till we have learned from thoſe ſacred records* (I uſe your own words) *what they were, and in what manner exerted by the apoſtles, we cannot form a proper judgment of thoſe evidences which are brought either to confirm, or confute their continuance in the church: and muſt conſequently diſpute at random, as chance or prejudice may prompt us, about things unknown to us.*¶

Now, Sir, if this be true (as without doubt it is) then it neceſſarily follows, that ſeeing, from the beginning of your book to the end, you ſpend not one page to *inform* either yourſelf or your readers, concerning the nature of theſe miraculous powers, *as they are repreſented to us in the hiſtory of the goſpel:* you *diſpute* throughout the whole *at random, as chance or prejudice prompts you, about things unknown to you.*

8. You † reply to *the adverſaries of your ſcheme*, I may let alone for the preſent; and the rather, becauſe the arguments uſed therein, will occur again and again. Only I would here take notice

§ p. 13. ‖ p. 14. ¶ p. 15 — 27. † p. 11.

tice of one aſſertion, *that the miraculous powers conferred* on the apoſtles themſelves *were imparted juſt at the moment of their exertion, and withdrawn again as ſoon as thoſe particular occaſions were ſerved*‡. You ſhould not have aſſerted this, be it true or falſe, without ſome ſtronger proof. *This, I ſay, is evident*‖, is not a ſufficient proof; nor, *A treatiſe is prepared on that ſubject*§. Neither is it proved by that comment of ¶*Grotius* on our Lord's promiſe, which literally tranſlated runs thus: *To every believer there was then given ſome wonderful power, which was to exert itſelf, not indeed always but when there was occaſion.*

9. But waving this; I grant *the ſingle point in diſpute, is, Whether the teſtimony of the fathers, be a ſufficient ground to believe, that miraculous gifts ſubſiſted at all, after the days of the apoſtles*†? But with this you interweave another queſtion, Whether the fathers were not all fools or knaves? In treating of which you ſtrongly intimate; firſt, That ſuch gifts did never ſubſiſt, and ſecondly, That the apoſtles were equally wiſe and good, with the *wonder-workers* (your favourite term) that followed them.

When therefore you add, *My opinion is this, that after our Lord's aſcenſion, the extraordinary gifts he had promiſed were poured out on the apoſtles,*

G 2

‡ p. 23. ‖ ibid. § p. 24.

¶ *Gratius* in *Mar.* xvi. 17. Non omnibus omnia—ita tamen cuilibet credenti tunc data ſit admirabelis faultas, quæ ſe, non ſemper quidem, ſed data occaſione explicaret.

† p. 27.

tles, and the other primary inſtruments of planting the goſpel; in order to enable them to over-rule the inveterate prejudices both of the Jews *and* Gentiles, *and to bear up againſt the diſcouraging ſhocks of popular rage and perſecution* ‡. I look upon all this to be mere grimace. You believe not one word of what you ſay. You cannot poſſibly, if you believe what you ſaid before. For who can believe both the ſides of a contradiction?

10. However I will ſuppoſe you do believe it, and will argue with you from your own words. But firſt let us have a few more of them§. *In proceſs of time, as miraculous powers began to be leſs and leſs wanted, ſo they began gradually to decline, till they were finally withdrawn*‖. *And this may probably be thought to have happened while ſome of the apoſtles were ſtill living.*

Theſe were given, you ſay, to the firſt planters of the goſpel, *in order to enable them to overrule the invcterate prejudices both of* Jews *and* Gentiles, *and to bear up againſt the ſhocks of perſecution.* Thus far we are agreed. They were given for theſe ends. But if you allow this, you cannot ſuppoſe, conſiſtently with yourſelf, that they were withdrawn till theſe ends were fully anſwered. So long therefore as thoſe prejudices ſubſiſted, and Chriſtians were expoſed to the ſhocks of perſecution, you cannot deny but there was the ſame occaſion for thoſe powers to be continued, as there was for their being given at

‡ p. 28. § p. 28. ‖ p. 29.

at firſt. And this, you ſay, is ¶ *a poſtulatum, which all people will grant, that they continued as long as they were neceſſary to the church.*

11. Now did thoſe prejudices ceaſe, or was perſecution at an end, while ſome of the apoſtles were ſtill living? You have yourſelf abundantly ſhewn they did not. You know, there was as ſharp perſecution in the third century, as there was in the firſt, while all the apoſtles were living. And with regard to prejudices, you have induſtriouſly remarked, that † *the principal writers of* Rome, *who make any mention of the Chriſtians, about the time of* Trajan, *ſpeak of them as a ſet of deſpicable, ſtubborn, and even wicked enthuſiaſts: That* ‡ Suetonius *calls them "a race of men of a new and miſchievous ſuperſtition:"* And that § Tacitus, *deſcribing the horrible tortures which they ſuffered under* Nero, *ſays, "They were deteſted for their flagitious practices; poſſeſſed with an abominable ſuperſtition, and condemned not ſo much for their ſuppoſed crime of firing the city, as from the hatred of all mankind."*

And ‖ *their condition*, you ſay, continued *much the ſame, till they were eſtabliſhed by the civil power: during all which time they were conſtantly inſulted and calumniated by their Heathen adverſaries, as a ſtupid, credulous, impious ſect, the very ſcum of mankind.* In a word, both with regard to prejudice and perſecution, I read in your following page, ¶ *The Heathen magiſtrates would not give*

 themſelves

¶ p. 11. † p. 193. ‡ p. 194. § p. 195. ‖ p. 195. ¶ p. 196.

themſelves the trouble, to make the leaſt enquiry into their manners or doctrines; but condemned them for the mere name, without examination or trial: treating a Chriſtian of courſe as guilty of every crime, as an enemy of the gods, emperors, laws, and of nature itſelf.

12. If then the end of thoſe miraculous powers was, *To overcome inveterate prejudices, and to enable the Chriſtians to bear up againſt the ſhocks of perſecution:* how can you poſſibly conceive that thoſe powers ſhould ceaſe, while ſome of the apoſtles were living? With what colour can you aſſert, that they were leſs wanted for theſe ends, in the ſecond and third, than in the apoſtolic age? With what ſhadow of reaſon can you maintain, that (if they ever ſubſiſted at all) they were finally withdrawn, before Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by the civil power? Then indeed theſe ends did manifeſtly ceaſe; perſecution was at an end; and the inveterate prejudices which ſo long obtained, were in great meaſure rooted up; another plain reaſon why the powers which were to balance theſe, ſhould remain in the church ſo long, and no longer.

13. You go on to acquaint us with the excellencies of your performance.† *The reader*, you ſay, *will find in theſe ſheets, none of thoſe arts, which are commonly employed by diſputants to perplex a good cauſe, or to paliate a bad one: no ſubtle refinements, forced conſtructions, or evaſive diſtinctions,*

† p. 31.

tinctions, but plain reaſoning grounded on plain facts, and publiſhed with an honeſt and diſintereſted view, to free the minds of men, from an inveterate impoſture. I have ſhewn that the antient fathers, by whom that deluſion was impoſed, were extremely credulous and ſuperſtitious: poſſeſt with ſtrong prejudices, and ſcrupling no art or means, by which they might propagate the ſame. Surely, Sir, you add the latter part of this paragraph, on purpoſe to confute the former: for juſt here you uſe one of the unfaireſt arts, which the moſt diſhoneſt diſputant can employ: in endeavouring to foreſtall the judgment of the reader, and to prejudice him againſt thoſe men, on whom he ought not to paſs any ſentence, before he has heard the evidence.

1. In the beginning of your *introductory diſcourſe*, you declare the reaſons which moved you to publiſh it. One of theſe, you ſay, was, the ‡ late increaſe of popery in this kingdom; chiefly occaſioned, as you ſuppoſe, by the confident aſſertions of the *Romiſh* emiſſaries, that there has been a ſucceſſion of miracles in their church, from the apoſtolic to the preſent age. To obviate this plea, you would § *ſettle ſome rule of diſcerning the true from the falſe; ſo as to give a reaſon for admitting the miracles of one age, and rejecting thoſe of another.*

2. This has a pleaſing ſound, and is extreme-

‡ p. 41. § p. 44.

ly well imagined to prejudice a proteſtant reader in your favour. You then ſlide with great art into your ſubject, ‖ *This claim of a miraculous power, now peculiar to the church of* Rome, *was aſſerted in all Chriſtian countries till the reformation.* "But then † *the cheat was detected*: Nay, and men began to *ſuſpect, that the church had long been governed by the ſame arts. For,* ‡ *it was eaſy to trace them up* to the primitive church, tho' not to *fix the time when the cheat began*; to *ſhew, how long after the days of the apoſtles, the miraculous gifts continued in the church.* However it is commonly believed, that they continued 'till Chriſtianity was the eſtabliſhed religion. § Some indeed extend them to the fourth and fifth centuries: but ‖ theſe, you ſay, betray the proteſtant cauſe, *For in the third, fourth, and fifth, the chief corruptions of popery were introduced, at leaſt the ſeeds of them ſown.* ¶ *By theſe I mean, monkery; the worſhip of reliques; invocation of ſaints; prayers for the dead; the ſuperſtitious uſe of images; of the ſacraments; of the ſign of the croſs, and of the conſecrated oil.*

3. I have nothing to do with the fourth or fifth century. But to what you alledge in ſupport of this charge, ſo far as it relates to the third century, I have a few things to reply.

And firſt, you quote not one line from any father in the third century, in favour of *monkery, the*

‖ ibid. † p. 45. ‡ p. 46. § p. 50. ‖‖ p. 51. ¶ p. 52.

the worſhip of reliques, the invocation of ſaints, or the ſuperſtitious uſe either of images, or conſecrated oil. How is this, Sir? You brought eight accuſations at once againſt the fathers of the third, as well as the following centuries: and as to five of the eight, when you call for the proof, you have not one word to ſay! As to the ſixth‖, *In the ſacrament of the Euchariſt, ſeveral abuſes were introduced.* You inſtance, firſt, in mixing the wine with water. But how does it appear, that this was any abuſe at all? Or, that ¶ *Irenæus declared it to have been taught as well as practiſed by our Saviour?* The words you quote to prove this, do not prove it at all; they ſimply relate a matter of fact: † *Taking the bread he confeſt it to be his body, and the mixt cup, he affirmed it was his blood.* You cannot be ignorant of this fact, that the cup uſed after the paſchal ſupper, was always mixt with water. But ‡ *Cyprian declared, this mixture to have been enjoined to himſelf by a divine revelation.* If he did, that will not prove it to be an abuſe: ſo that you are wide of the point ſtill. You inſtance next in their ſending the bread to the ſick; which (as well as the mixtute) is mentioned by *Juſtin Martyr.* This fact likewiſe we allow: but you have not proved it to be an abuſe. I grant, that near an hundred years after, ſome began to have a ſuperſtitious regard for this bread.

‖ p. 57. ¶ ibid. † p. 58.

‡ Accipiens panem, ſuum corpus eſſe confitebatur; & temperamentum calicis, ſuum ſanguinem confirmavit.

But, that in *Tertullian's days it was carried home and locked up as a divine treasure*, I call upon you to prove: as also, § that infant-communion was an abuse; or the styling it *the sacrifice of the body of* Christ. I believe the *offering it up for the martyrs was an abuse*; and that this with *the superstitious use of the sign of the cross* were, if not the earliest of all, yet as early as any which crept into the Christian church.

4. 'Tis certain † *praying for the dead was common in the second century:* you might have said, and in the first also; seeing that petition *Thy kingdom come*, manifestly concerns the saints in paradise, as well as those upon earth. But 'tis far from certain, that *the purpose of this was, to procure relief and refreshment to the departed souls in some intermediate state of expiatory pains*; or, that *this* was the general *opinion of those times.*

5. As to ‡ the *consecrated oil*, you seem intirely to forget, that it was neither St. *Jerom*, nor St. *Chrysostom*, but St. *James*, who said, § *Is any sick among you? Let him send for the elders of the church. And let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.*

The sum is: you have charged the fathers of the third century with eight of *the chief corruptions of popery:* 1. Monkery, 2. The worship of reliques, 3. Invocation of saints, 4. The superstitious

§ p. 59. † p. 60. ‡ p. 63. § c. 5. 14, 15.

ſtitious uſe of images, 5. Of the conſecrated oil, 6. Of the ſacraments, 7. Of the ſign of the croſs, 8. Praying for the dead.

And what is all this heavy charge come to at laſt? Why juſt thus much: ſome of them, in the beginning of the third century, did ſuperſtitiouſly uſe the ſign of the croſs: and others in the middle of that century offered up the euchariſt for the martyrs on their annual feſtivals; though how you make this, *the ſuperſtitious uſe of the ſacraments*, I know not, or how theſe come to be the *chief corruptions of popery*.

Praying thus far for the dead, "That God would ſhortly accompliſh the number of his elect, and haſten his kingdom," and anointing the ſick with oil, you will not eaſily prove, to be any corruptions at all.

As to monkery, the worſhip of reliques, invocation of ſaints, and the ſuperſtitious uſe of images; you have not even attempted to prove, that theſe fathers were guilty: ſo that, for aught appears, you might as well have charged them on the apoſtles. ‖ *Yet it is no more*, you ſolemnly aſſure us, *than what fact and truth oblige you to ſay!* When I meet with any of theſe aſſurances for the time to come, I ſhall remember to ſtand upon my guard.

6. In the following pages you are arguing againſt the miracles of the fourth and fifth century. After which you add, ¶ *But if theſe muſt be*

‖ p. 65. ¶ p. 71.

be rejected, where then are we to stop? And to what period must we confine ourselves? This indeed is the grand difficulty, and what has puzzled all the other doctors, who have considered the same question before me. Sir, your memory is short. In this very discourse you yourself said just the contrary. You told us awhile ago, † that not only Dr. *Marshall*, Mr. *Dodwell*, and archbishop *Tillotson*, but *the generality of the protestant* doctors were agreed, *to what period* they should confine themselves: believing, that *miracles subsisted through the three first centuries, and ceased in the beginning of the fourth.*

7. However, that none of them may ever be puzzled any more, you will ‡ *lay down some generate principles, which may lead us to a more rational solution of the matter, than any that has hitherto been offered.* Here again I was all attention. And what did the mountain bring forth? What are these general principles, preceded by so solemn a declaration, and laid down § for thirteen pages together? Why, they are dwindled down into one, *That the forged miracles of the fourth century taint the credit of all the later miracles!* I should desire you to prove, that the miracles of the fourth century were *all forged*, but that it is not material to our question.

8. But you endeavour to shew it is. † *For that surprising confidence*, you say, *with which the fathers of the fourth age have affirmed as true what*

† p. 46. & seq. ‡ ibid. § p. 71---84. † p. 84.

what they themſelves had forged, or at leaſt knew to be forged, (a little more proof of that) *makes us ſuſpect, that ſo bold a defiance of truth could not become general at once, but muſt have been carried gradually to that height by cuſtom and the example of former times.* It does not appear that it did *become general* till long after the fourth century. And as this ſuppoſition is not ſufficiently proved, the inference from it is nothing worth.

9. You ſay, *Secondly*, ‡ *This age, in which Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed, had no occaſion for any miracles. They would not therefore begin to forge miracles, at a time when there was no particular temptation to it.* Yes, the greateſt temptation in the world, if they were ſuch men as you ſuppoſe. If they were men that *would ſcruple no art or means to inlarge their own credit and authority*, they would naturally *begin to forge miracles* at that time, when real miracles were no more.

10. You ſay, *Thirdly*, § *The later fathers had equal piety with the earlier, but more learning and leſs credulity. If theſe then be found either to have forged miracles themſelves, or propagated what they knew to be forged, or to have been deluded by the forgeries of others, it muſt excite the ſame ſuſpicion of their predeceſſors.* I anſwer, 1. It is not plain that the later fathers had equal piety with the earlier; nor 2. That they had leſs credulity. It ſeems ſome of them had much much more; witneſs *Hilarion*'s ‖ camel, and † ſmelling a devil

or

‡ Ibid. § p. 85. ‖ Free Inquiry, p. 89. † p. 90.

or a sinner; though even he was not so quick-scented as St. *Pachomius*, who (as many believe to this day) could "smell an heretic at a mile's distance." But if 3. the earlier fathers were holier than the later, they were not only less likely to delude others, but (even on *Plato*'s supposition) to be deluded themselves. For they would have more assistance from God.

11. But you say, *Fourthly*, † *The earlier ages* of the church were not purer *than the later*. Nay, *in some respects* they were worse. *For there never was any age in which so many rank heresies were professt, or so many spurious books forged and published, under the names of* Christ *and his apostles:* ‡ *several of which are cited by the most eminent fathers of those ages, as of equal authority with the scriptures. And none can doubt but those who would forge, or make use of forged books, would make use of forged miracles.*

I answer, 1. It is allowed, that before the end of the third century the church was greatly degenerated from its first purity. Yet I doubt not, 2. But abundantly more *rank heresies* have been publicly *professt* in many later ages. But they were not publicly *protested* against, and therefore historians did not record them. 3. You cannot but know it has always been the judgment of learned men, (which you are at liberty to refute if you are able) that the far greater part of those spurious books have been forged by heretics; and that

† Introd. Disc. p. 86. ‡ p. 87.

that many more were compiled by weak, well-meaning men, from what had been orally delivered down from the apoſtles. But 4. There have been in the church from the beginning men who had only the name of Chriſtians. And theſe doubtleſs were capable of pious frauds (ſo called.) But this ought not to be charged upon the whole body. Add to this 5. what is obſerved by Mr. *Daille:* "I impute a great part of this miſchief to thoſe men, who, before the invention of printing, were the tranſcribers and copiers out of manuſcripts. We may well preſume that theſe men took the ſame liberty in forging, as St. *Jerom* complains they did in corrupting books; eſpecially ſince this courſe was beneficial to them, which the other was not." Much more to the ſame effect we have in his treatiſe *Of the right uſe of the Fathers*, part I. chap. iii.——*N. B.* Theſe tranſcribers were not all Chriſtians, no, not in name: perhaps few, if any of them, in the firſt century. 6. By what evidences do you prove, that theſe ſpurious books *are frequently cited by the moſt eminent fathers, as* not only *genuine*, but *of equal* authority with the ſcriptures themſelves? Or, laſtly, that they either forged theſe books themſelves, or made uſe of what they knew to be forged? Theſe things alſo you are not to take for granted, but to prove, before your argument can be of force.

12. We are come at laſt to your *general* † *concluſion*,

† p. 91.

clusion, There is no sufficient reason to believe, that any miraculous powers subsisted in any age of the church after the times of the apostles.

But pretended miracles, you say, arose thus. ‡ *As the high authority of the apostlic writings, excited some of the most learned Christians* (prove that) *to forge books under their names; so the great fame of the apostolic miracles, would naturally excite some of the most crafty, when the apostles were dead, to attempt some juggling tricks in imitation of them. And when these artful pretenders had maintained their ground through the three first centuries, the leading clergy of the fourth understood their interest too well to part with the old plea of miraculous gifts.*

Round assertions indeed! But surely, Sir, you do not think that reasonable men will take these for proofs! You are here advancing a charge of the blackest nature. But where are your vouchers? Where are the witnesses to support it? Hitherto you have not been able to produce one, through a course of three hundred years; unless you bring in those Heathen, of whose senseless, shameless prejudices, you have yourself given so clear an account.

" But you designed to produce your witnesses in the *Free Inquiry*, a year or two after the *introductory discourse* was published. So you condemn them first, and try them afterwards; you will pass sentence now, and hear the evidence by

‡ P. 92.

by and by! A genuine ſpecimen of that impartial regard to truth, which you *profeſs* on all occaſions."

13. Another inſtance of this is in your marginal note. *The primitive Chriſtians were perpetually reproached for their groſs credulity.* They were; but by whom? Why, by *Jews* and Heathens. Accordingly the two witneſſes you produce here, are *Celſus* the *Jew*, and *Julian* the apoſtate. But leſt this ſhould not ſuffice, you make them confeſs the charge. † *The fathers*, your words are, *defend themſelves by ſaying, that they did no more than the philoſophers had always done: that* Pythagoras's *precepts were inculcated with an ipſe dixit, and they found the ſame method uſeful with the vulgar.* And is this their *whole* defence? Do the very men to whom you refer, *Origen* and *Arnobius*, in the very tracts to which you refer, give no other anſwer, than this argument *ad hominem?* Stand this as another genuine proof of Dr. *Middleton*'s candor and impartiality!

14. A further proof of your *frank and open nature*, and of your ‡ *contenting yourſelf with the diſcharge of your own conſcience, by a free declaration of your real ſentiments*, I find in the very next page. Here you ſolemnly declare, § *Chriſtianity is confirmed by the evidence of ſuch miracles, as, of all others on record, are the leaſt liable to exception, and carry the cleareſt marks of their ſincerity*;

† p. 93. ‡ p. 40, § p. 94.

ſincerity; *being wrought by* Chriſt *and his apoſtles, for an end ſo great, ſo important, as to be highly worthy the interpoſition of the Deity: wrought by mean and ſimple men, and delivered by eye-witneſſes, whoſe characters exclude the ſuſpicion of fraud.* * Sir, do you believe one word of what you ſo ſolemnly declare? You have yourſelf declared the contrary. But if you do not, where ſhall we have you? Or how can we believe you another time? How ſhall we know, I will not ſay, when you ſpeak truth, but when you would have us think you do? By what criterion ſhall we diſtinguiſh between what is ſpoken in your real, and what in your perſonated character? How diſcern when you ſpeak as Dr. *Middleton*, and when as the *public librarian?*

15. You go on. ‖ *By granting the* Romaniſts *but a ſingle age of miracles after the apoſtles, we ſhall be entangled in difficulties whence we can never extricate ourſelves, till we allow the ſame powers to the preſent age.* I will allow them however three ages of miracles, and let them make what advantage of it they can.

You proceed. † *If the ſcriptures are a compleat rule* (I reject the word *ſufficient*, becauſe it is ambiguous) *we do not want the fathers as guides, or if clear, as interpreters. An eſteem for them has carried many into dangerous errors, the neglect of them can have no ill conſequences.* I anſwer, 1. The ſcriptures are a compleat rule of faith and practice;

‖ p. 96. † p. 97.

practice; and they are clear in all neceſſary points And yet their clearneſs does not prove, that they need not be explained; nor their compleatneſs, that they need not be inforced. 2. The eſteeming the writings of the three firſt centuries, not equally with, but next to the ſcriptures, never carried any man yet into dangerous errors, nor probably ever will. But it has brought many out of dangerous errors, and particularly out of the errors of popery. 3. The neglect, in *your* ſenſe, of the primitive fathers, that is, the thinking they were all fools and knaves, has this natural conſequence (which I grant is no ill one, according to your principles) to make all who are not real Chriſtians, think *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* and his apoſtles, juſt as honeſt and wiſe as them.

16. You afterwards endeavour to ſhew how the church of *England* came to have ſuch an eſteem for the antient fathers. There are ſeveral particulars in this account which are liable to exception. But I let them paſs, as they have little connexion with the point in queſtion.

17. You conclude your *introductory diſcourſe* thus: ‡ *The deſign of the preſent treatiſe, is to fix the religion of the proteſtants on its proper baſis, that is, in the ſacred ſcriptures.* Here again you ſpeak in your perſonated character; as alſo when you § *freely own the primitive writers to be of uſe in atteſting and tranſmitting to us the genuine books of*

‡ p. 111. § p. 112.

of the holy ſcriptures! Books, for the full atteſtation as well as ſafe tranſmiſſion whereof, you have doubtleſs the deepeſt concern.

18. I cannot diſmiſs this diſcourſe without obſerving, that the uncommon artfulneſs and diſingenuity which glare through the whole, muſt needs give diſguſt to every honeſt and upright heart, nor is it any credit at all to the cauſe you have eſpouſed. Nay, I am perſuaded there are many in theſe kingdoms, who, though they think as you do concerning the Chriſtian ſyſtem, yet could not endure the thought of writing againſt it in the manner that you have done; of combating fraud (if it were ſo) with fraud, and practiſing the very thing which they profeſt to expoſe and abhor.

In your *Free Inquiry* itſelf you † *propoſe,*

I. *To draw out in order all the principal teſtimonies which relate to miraculous gifts, as they are found in the writings of the fathers, from the earlieſt ages after the apoſtles; whence we ſhall ſee at one view, the whole evidence by which they have hitherto been ſupported.*

II. *To throw together all which thoſe fathers have delivered, concerning the perſons ſaid to have been endued with thoſe gifts.*

III. ‡ *To illuſtrate the particular characters and*

† Free Inquiry, p. 1. ‡ p. 2.

and opinions of the fathers who atteſt thoſe miracles.

IV. *To review all the ſeveral kinds of miracles which are pretended to have been wrought, and to obſerve from the nature of each how far they may reaſonably be ſuſpected.*

V. *To refute ſome of the moſt plauſible objections, which have been hitherto made.*

I was in hopes you would have given, at leaſt in entering upon your main work, what you promiſed ſo long ago, an account of *the* § *proper nature and condition of thoſe miraculous powers, which are the ſubject of the whole diſpute, as they are repreſented to us in the hiſtory of the goſpel.* But as you do not appear to have any thought of doing it at all, you will give me leave at length to do it for you.

The original promiſe of theſe runs thus: ‖ *Theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe. In my name ſhall they caſt out devils; they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues; they ſhall take up ſerpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it ſhall not hurt them. They ſhall lay hands on the ſick, and they ſhall recover.*

A further account is given of them by St. *Peter*, on the very day whereon that promiſe was fulfilled. ¶ *This is that which is ſpoken of by the*

§ Preface, p. 10. ‖ Mark xvi. 17, 18. ¶ Acts ii. 16, 17.

the prophet Joel, *And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, ſaid* God, *your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy, and your young men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dream dreams.*

The account given by St. *Paul* is a little fuller than this: † *There are diverſities of gifts,* (χαρισμάτων, the uſual ſcriptural term for the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghoſt) *but the ſame Spirit—For to one is given the word of wiſdom—to another the gifts of healing—to another the working of* (other) *miracles—to another prophecy—to another diſcernment of ſpirits—to another divers kinds of tongues—to another the interpretation of tongues. All theſe worketh that one and the ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.*

Hence we may obſerve, that the chief χαρίσματα, ſpiritual gifts conferred on the apoſtolical church, were 1. Caſting out devils, 2. Speaking with new tongues, 3. Eſcaping dangers in which otherwiſe they muſt have periſhed, 4. Healing the ſick, 5. Prophecy, foretelling things to come, 6. Viſions, 7. Divine dreams, and 8. Diſcerning of ſpirits.

Some of theſe appear to have been chiefly deſigned for the conviction of *Jews* and Heathens, as the caſting out devils, and ſpeaking with new tongues; ſome chiefly for the benefit of their fellow Chriſtians, as healing the ſick, foretelling the things to come, and the diſcernment of ſpirits; and all, in order to enable thoſe who either wrought

† Cor. xii. 8—11.

wrought or saw them, to *run with patience the race set before them*, through all the storms of persecution, which the most inveterate prejudice, rage, and malice could raise against them.

I. 1. You are, first, *To draw out in order all the principal testimonies, which relate to miraculous gifts, as they are found in the writings of the fathers from the earliest ages after the apostles.*

You begin with the apostolic fathers, that is, those who lived and conversed with the apostles. *There are several*, you say, *of this character, whose writings still remain to us, St. Barnabas, St. Clemens, St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, St. Hermas.* " ‡ Now if those gifts had subsisted after the days of the apostles, these *must have possest* a *large share of them.* But if any of them had, he would have mentioned it in his writings, which not one of them has done."

The argument, fully proposed, runs thus:

If any such gifts had subsisted in them, or in their days, they must have mentioned them in their *circular epistles to the churches* (for so their predecessors, the apostles did:) but they did not mention any such gifts therein.

Sir, Your consequence is not of any force. As will easily appear by a parallel argument.

If such gifts had subsisted in St. *Peter*, or in his days, he must have mentioned them in his *circular*

‡ p. 8.

circular epiſtles to the churches. But he does not mention any ſuch gifts therein. Therefore they did not ſubſiſt in him, or in his days.

Your argument therefore proves too much; nor can it conclude againſt an apoſtolic father, without concluding againſt the apoſtle too.

If therefore the apoſtolic fathers, had not mentioned any miraculous gifts, *in their circular epiſtles to the churches*, you could not have inferred that they poſſeſt none: ſince neither does he mention them in his circular epiſtles, whom you allow to have poſſeſt them.

Of all the apoſtles you can produce but one, St. *Paul*, who makes mention of thoſe gifts. And that, not in his *circular epiſtles* to the churches. For I know not that he wrote any ſuch.

1. All this time I have been arguing on your own ſuppoſitions, that theſe five apoſtolic fathers, all wrote *circular epiſtles to the churches*, and yet *never mentioned theſe gifts therein.* But neither of theſe ſuppoſitions is true. For 1. *Hermas* wrote no epiſtle at all: 2. Although the reſt wrote epiſtles to particular churches, (*Clemens* to the *Corinthians*, *Ignatius* to the *Romans*, &c.) yet not one of them wrote any *circular epiſtle to the churches*, like thoſe of St. *James* and St. *Peter* (unleſs we allow that to be a genuine epiſtle, which bears the name of St. *Barnabas.*) 3. You own, they all † *ſpeak of ſpiritual gifts, as abound-*

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† p. 3.

ing among the Chriſtians of that age: but aſſert, *Theſe cannot mean any thing more, than faith, hope and charity.* You aſſert—But the proof, Sir; I want the proof. Though I am but one of the *vulgar*, yet I am not half ſo *credulous* as you apprehend the firſt Chriſtians to have been. *Ipſe dixi* will not ſatisfy me; I want plain, clear, logical proof; eſpecially, when I conſider, how much you build upon this; that is the main foundation whereon your hypotheſis ſtands. You yourſelf muſt allow, that *in the epiſtle of St.* Paul, πνευματικά χαρίσματα, *ſpiritual gifts*, does always mean more than faith, hope and charity; that it conſtantly means *miraculous gifts.* How then do you prove, that in the epiſtles of St. Ignatius, it means quite another thing? Not miraculous gifts, but only *the ordinary gifts and graces of the goſpel?* I thought † *the reader* was to *find no evaſive diſtinctions in the following ſheets.* Prove then that this diſtinction is not evaſive: that the ſame words mean abſolutely different things. Till this is clearly and ſolidly done, reaſonable men muſt believe that this and the like expreſſions mean the ſame thing in the writings of the apoſtolical fathers, as they do in the writings of the apoſtles; namely, not the *ordinary graces* of the goſpel, but the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.

3. You aim indeed at a proof, which would be home to the point, if you were but able to

† Preface, p. 31.

make it out. ‡ *These fathers themselves seem to disclaim all gifts of a more extraordinary kind. Thus* Polycarp, *in his epistle to the* Philippians, *says*, " *neither I, nor any other such as I am, can come up to the wisdom of the blessed* Paul." *And in the same epistle he declares*, " *It was not granted to him to practise that, Be ye angry, and sin not.*" *St.* Ignatius *also, in his epistle to the* Ephesians, *says*, " § *These things I prescribe to you, not as if I were somebody extraordinary. For though I am bound for his name, I am not yet perfect in* Christ Jesus." I think verily, these extraordinary proofs may stand without any reply.

4. Yet you courteously add, ‖ *If from the passages referred to above, or any other, it should appear probable to any, that they were favoured on some occasions, with some extraordinary illuminations, visions, or divine impressions; I shall not dispute that point, but remind them only that these gifts were granted for their particular comfort, and do not therefore in any manner affect, or relate to the question now before us.*

I ask pardon, Sir. These do so deeply affect, so nearly relate to the question now before us, even as stated by ¶ yourself, that in allowing these, you give up the substance of the question. You yourself have declared, that one great end of the *extraordinary gifts* conferred on the apostles was, *To enable them to bear up against the shocks of popular rage and persecution.* Now were not *extraordinary*

‡ p. 7. § p. 8. ‖ p. 10. ¶ Preface, p. 28.

extraordinary illuminations, visions and impressions, if given at all, given for this very end? *For their particular comfort*, as you now word it? Therefore in allowing these to the apostolic fathers, you allow *extraordinary gifts*, which had been formerly granted to the apostles, to have *subsisted in the church after the days of the apostles*, and for the same end as they did before.

5. Therefore *the apostolic writers have* not *left us in the dark*, with regard to our present argument. And consequently your triumph comes too soon: † *Here then we have an interval of half a century, in which we have the strongest reason to presume, that the extraordinary gifts of the apostolic age were withdrawn.* No; not if all *the apostolic fathers speak of spiritual gifts, as abounding among the Christians of that age:* not if *extraordinary illuminations, visions, and divine impressions still subsisted among them.* For as to your now putting in, *as exerted openly in the church for the conviction of unbelievers*, I must desire you, to put it out again; it comes a great deal too late. The question between you and me was stated without it, above a hundred pages back. Although if it be admitted it will do you no service: seeing your proposition is overthrown, if there were *miraculous gifts after the days of the apostles*, whether they were *openly exerted for the conviction of unbelievers* or not.

6. I was a little surprised, that you should take

† p. 9.

your leave of the apoſtolic fathers ſo ſoon. But upon looking forward, my ſurprize was at an end: I found you was not guilty of any deſign to ſpare them: but only delayed your remarks till the reader ſhould be prepared for what might have ſhocked him, had it ſtood in its proper place.

I do not find indeed, that you make any objection to any part of the epiſtles of *Ignatius*: no nor of the catholic epiſtle, which is inſcribed with the name of *Barnabas*. This clearly convinces me, you have not read it; I am apt to think, not one page of it; ſeeing if you had, you would never have let ſlip ſuch an opportunity of expoſing one that was called an apoſtolic father.

7. But it would have been ſtrange, if you had not ſomewhere brought in the famous phœnix of *Clemens Romanus*. And yet you are very merciful upon that head, barely remarking concerning it, That ‡ *he alledged the ridiculous ſtory of the phœnix, as a type and proof of the reſurrection.* Whether *all the Heathen writers treat it as nothing elſe but a mere fable*, I know not. But that it is ſo is certain; and conſequently the argument drawn from it is weak and inconcluſive. Yet it will not hence follow, that either *Clemens* was a wicked man, or that he had none of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.

8. There is no real blemiſh to be found, in the

‡ p. 59.

the whole character of St. *Polycarp*. But there is one circumſtance left upon record concerning him, which has the appearance of weakneſs. And with this you do not fail to acquaint your reader at a convenient ſeaſon; namely, ‡ *that in the moſt antient diſpute, concerning the time of holding Eaſter, St.* Polycarp *and* Anicetus *ſeverally alledged apoſtolic tradition for their different practice.* And 'tis not improbable, that both alledged what was true; that in a point of ſo little importance the apoſtles varied themſelves; ſome of them obſerving it on the fourteenth day of the moon, and others not. But be this as it may it can be no poof, either that Polycarp was not an holy man, or that he was not favoured with the extraordinary, as well as ordinary gifts of the Spirit.

9. With regard to the *narrative of his martyrdom* you affirm, § *it is one of the moſt authentic pieces in all primitive antiquity.* I will not vouch for its authenticity: nor therefore for the ſtory of the dove, the flame forming an arch, the fragrant ſmell, or the revelation to Pionius. But your attempt to *account for* theſe things, is truly curious. You ſay, *An* ‖ *arch of flame round his body is an appearance which might eaſily happen, from the common effects of wind. And the dove ſaid to fly out of him, might be conveyed into the wood which was prepared to conſume him.* How much more naturally may we account for both, by

 ſuppoſing

‡ p. 60. § p. 124. ‖ p. 229.

fuppoſing the whole to be a modern fiction, wrote on occaſion of that account mentioned by Euſebius, but loſt many ages ago? But whatever may be thought of this account of his death, neither does this affect the queſtion, Whether during his life he was endued with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.

10. There is one of thoſe whom you ſtyle apoſtolic fathers yet behind, of whom you talk full as familiarly as of the reſt. I mean, *Hermas: to whom you ſay,* ‖ *ſome impute the fraud of forging the Sibylline books.* It would not have been amiſs, if you had told us, which of the antients, whether Chriſtian, Jew, or Heathen, ever accuſed him of this. If none ever did, ſome will be apt to think, 'tis giving a perſon but hard meaſure, to bring an accuſation againſt him which never was heard of, till ſixteen hundred years after his death.

But I can the more eaſily excuſe you, becauſe he is a perſon whom you are wholly unacquainted with. Though 'tis much, curioſity did not lead you, when you had archbiſhop Wake's tranſlation in your hand, to read over if it were but half a dozen pages of his famous ſhepherd. But charity obliges me to believe you never did. Otherwiſe I cannot conceive you would ſo peremptorily affirm, of him and the reſt together, *There* ¶ *is not the leaſt claim or pretenſion, in all their*

‖ p. 37. ¶ p. 3.

their ſeveral pieces, to any of theſe extraordinary gifts, which are the ſubject of this inquiry. I am amazed! Sir, have you never a friend in the world? If you was yourſelf ignorant of the whole affair; would no one inform you, that all the three books of Hermas, from the firſt page to the laſt, are nothing elſe than a recital of his *extraordinary gifts*, his viſions, propheſies, and revelations?

Can you expect after this, that any man in his ſenſes, ſhould take your word for any thing under heaven? That any one ſhould credit any thing which you affirm? Or believe you any farther than he can ſee you? *Jeſus* whom you perſecute can forgive you this; but how can you forgive yourſelf? One would think, you ſhould be crying out, day and night, "*The Shepherd of Hermas* will not let me ſleep."

11. You proceed to the teſtimony of † *Juſtin Martyr*, who wrote about fifty years after the apoſtles. He ſays, (I tranſlate his words literally) *There are prophetic gifts among us even until now. You may ſee with us both women and men, having gifts from the Spirit of* God. He particularly inſiſts on that of *caſting out devils, as what every one might ſee with his own eyes.*

‡ *Irenæus*, who wrote ſomewhat later, affirms, *That all who were truly diſciples of* Jeſus, *wrought miracles in his name; ſome caſt out devils; others had viſions, or the knowledge of future events;*

† p. 10. ‡ p. 11.

others healed the ſick.—§ *And as to raiſing the dead, he declares it have been frequently performed on neceſſary occaſions, by great faſting, and the joint ſupplication of the church. And we hear many,* ſays he, *ſpeaking with all kinds of tongues, and expounding the myſteries of* God.

‖ *Theophilus,* biſhop of *Antioch,* who lived in the ſame age, ſpeaks of caſting out devils as then common in the church.

12. ¶ Tertullian, *who flouriſhed toward the end of the ſecond century, challenges the Heathen magiſtrates, to* " *call before any of their tribunals, any perſon poſſeſt with a devil. And if the evil ſpirit, when commanded by any Chriſtian, did not confeſs himſelf to be a devil, who elſewhere called himſelf a god, they ſhould take the life of that Chriſtian.*"

† Minutius Felix, *ſuppoſed to have wrote in the beginning of the third century, addreſſing himſelf to his Heathen friend, ſays,* " *The greateſt part of you know what confeſſions the Demons make concerning themſelves, when we expel them out of the bodies of men.*"

13. ‡ Origen, *ſomething younger than* Minutius, *declares, that there remained ſtill the manifeſt indications of the Holy Spirit.* " *For the Chriſtians,* ſays he, *caſt out devils, perform many cures, foretel things to come.—And many have been converted to Chriſtianity by viſions. I have ſeen many examples of this ſort.*"

In

§ p. 12. ‖ ibid. ¶ ibid. † p. 13. ‡ p. 14.

§ In another place he says, " *Signs of the Holy Ghost were shewn at the beginning of the teaching of* Jesus: (not as you translate it, *miracles began with the preaching of* Jesus; that is quite a different thing) *more were shewn after this ascension, but afterwards fewer. However even now there are still some remains of them with a few, whose souls are cleansed by the word, and a life conformable to it.*" ‖ Again, " *Some,* says he, *heal the sick. I myself have seen many so healed, of loss of senses, madness, and innumerable other evils, which neither men nor devils can cure.* ¶ *And this is done, not by magical arts, but by prayer, and certain plain adjurations, such as any common Christian may use; for generally common men do things of this kind.*"

14. † Cyprian, *who wrote about the middle of the third century,* says, " *Beside the visions of the night, even in the day-time, innocent children among us are filled with the Holy Spirit; and in extasies see, and hear, and speak those things by which* God *is pleased to admonish and instruct us.* Elsewhere he particularly mentions the casting out devils: " *Which,* says he, ‡ *either depart immediately, or by degrees, according to the faith of the patient, or the grace of him that works the cure.*"

§§ Arnobius, *who is supposed to have wrote in the year of* Christ 303, *tells us,* " Christ *appears even now to men unpolluted, and eminently holy,*

§ p. 15. ‖ ibid. ¶ p. 16. † ibid. ‡ p. 17. §§ p. 18.

who love him:—Whose very name puts evil spirits to flight, strikes the prophets dumb, deprives the sooth-sayers of the power of answering, and frustrates the acts of arrogant magicians."

‖ Lactantius, *who wrote about the same time, speaking of evil spirits*, says, "*Being adjured by Christians, they retire out of the bodies of men —confess themselves to be Dæmons, and tell their names, even the same which are adored in the temples.*"

15. † *These*, you say, *are the principal testimonies which assert miraculous gifts through the three first centuries; which might be supported by many more of the same kind, from the same as well as different writers. But none can scruple to risk the fate of the cause upon these.* Thus far I do not scruple it. I do not doubt but the testimonies of these nine witnesses, added to the evidence of the apostolic fathers, will satisfy every impartial man with regard to the point in question. Yet I see no cause, if there are nine witnesses more, to give up their evidence; seeing you may possibly raise objections against these which the others are unconcerned in.

If then you should invalidate what I have to reply in behalf of the witnesses now produced, you will have done but half your work: I shall afterwards require a fair hearing for the others also.

16. ‡ You close this head with remarking, 1. *That the silence of all the apostolic writers on the subject of these gifts, must dispose us to conclude they*

‖ p. 18. † p. 19. ‡ ibid.

they were then withdrawn. O, Sir, mention this no more. I intreat you never name their silence again. They speak loud enough to shame you as long as you live. You cannot therefore talk with any grace of *the pretended revival of them, after a cessation of forty or fifty years*; or draw conclusions from that which never was.

Your second remark is perfectly new: I dare say none ever observed before yourself, that this particular circumstance of the primitive Christians, *carried with it an air of imposture*, namely, their § *challenging all the world to come and see* the miracles which they wrought! To compleat the argument you should have added, And *their staking their lives* upon the performance of them.

17. I doubt you have not gone one step forward yet. You have indeed advanced many bold assertions; but you have not fairly proved one single conclusion with regard to the point in hand.

But a natural effect of your lively imagination is, that from this time you argue more and more weakly; inasmuch, as the farther you go, the more things you imagine (and only imagine) yourself to have proved. Consequently as you gather up more mistakes every step you take, every page is more precarious than the former.

II. 1. The second thing you proposed was,

§ p. 21.

‖ *To throw together all which thoſe fathers have delivered concerning the perſons ſaid to have been endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.*

Now whenever we think or ſpeak with reverence, ſay you, *of thoſe primitive times, it is always with regard to theſe very fathers, whoſe teſtimonies I have been collecting. And they were indeed the chief perſons and champions of the Chriſtian cauſe, the paſtors, biſhops, and martyrs of the primitive church*; namely, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Theophilus*, *Tertullian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*. Sir, you ſtumble at the threſhold. A common dictionary may inform you that theſe were not all, either paſtors, biſhops, or martyrs.

2. You go on as you ſet out. *Yet* ¶ *none of theſe have any where affirmed, that they themſelves were endued with any power of working miracles.* You ſhould ſay; with any of thoſe *extraordinary gifts* promiſed by our Lord, and conferred on his apoſtles.

No! Have *none of theſe any where affirmed, that they themſelves* were endued with any extraordinary gifts? What think you of the very firſt of them, *Juſtin Martyr?* Either you are quite miſtaken in the account you give of him † elſewhere, or he *affirmed* this *of himſelf* over and over. And as to *Cyprian*, you will by and by ſpend ‡ ſeveral pages together, on the extraordinary

‖ p. 21. ¶ p. 22. † p. 27, 30. ‡ p. 101.

ordinary gifts he *affirmed himſelf* to be endued with.

But ſuppoſe they had not *any where affirmed* this *of themſelves*, what would you infer therefrom? That they were not endued with any extraordinary gifts? Then by the very ſame method of arguing, you might prove that neither St. *Peter*, nor *James*, nor *John*, were indued with any ſuch. For neither do they *any where affirm this of themſelves* in any of the writings which they left behind them.

3. Your argument concerning the apoſtolic fathers is juſt as concluſive as this. For if you ſay, "The writers following the apoſtolic fathers, do not affirm them to have had any miraculous gifts; therefore they had none:" by a parity of reaſon, you muſt ſay, "The writers following the apoſtles do not affirm them to have had any miraculous gifts; therefore the apoſtles had none."

4. Your next argument againſt the exiſtence of thoſe gifts is, "That the fathers do not tell us the names of them which had them." This is not altogether true. The names of *Juſtin Martyr* and *Cyprian* are pretty well known: as is, among the learned, that of † *Dionyſius*, biſhop of *Alexandria*. But what if they did not? Suppoſing miraculous powers *were openly exerted in the church*; and that not only they themſelves, but *every one elſe might ſee* this *whenever they pleaſed*: if any Heathen

† p. 106, 212.

Heathen might *come and see* whenever he pleased, what could a reasonable man desire more? What did it signify to him to know the names of those whom he heard prophesying, or saw working miracles? Though without doubt, whoever saw the miracles wrought, might easily learn the names of those that wrought them; which nevertheless the Christians had no need to publish abroad, to expose them so much the more to the rage and malice of their persecutors.

6. Your third argument is, † *The Christian workers of miracles were always charged with imposture by their adversaries.* Lucian *tells us*, "*Whenever any crafty juggler went to the Christians, he grew rich immediately.*" *And* Celsus *represents the Christian wonder-workers as mere vagabonds and common cheats, who rambled about to fairs and markets.*

And is it any wonder, that either a *Jew* or a Heathen should represent them thus? Sir, I do not blame you for not believing the Christian system, but for betraying so gross a partiality: for gleaning up every scrap of Heathen scandal, and palming it upon us as unquestionable evidence; and for not translating even these miserable fragments with any accuracy or faithfulness. Instead of giving us the text, bad as it is, you commonly substitute a paraphrase yet worse. And this the unlearned reader naturally supposes to be a faithful translation. It is no credit to your

† p. 23.

your cauſe if it needs ſuch ſupports. And this is no credit to you if it does not.

To that of *Lucian* and *Celſus*, you add the evidence of *Cæcilius* too, who calls, ſay you, theſe workers of miracles, a lurking nation, ſhunning the light. Then they were ſtrangely altered all on a ſudden. For you † told us, that juſt before they were proving themſelves cheats by a widely different method; by *calling out both upon magiſtrates and people, and challenging all the world to come and ſee what they did!*

I was not aware, that you had yet begun *To throw together all which the fathers have delivered, concerning the perſons ſaid to have been endued with thoſe extraordinary gifts.* And, it ſeems, you have made an end of it! And accordingly you proceed to ſum up the evidence, to *obſerve upon the whole*, ‡ *From theſe characters of the primitive wonder-workers, as given both by friends and enemies, we may fairly conclude that the gifts of thoſe ages were generally engroſſed by private Chriſtians, who travelled about from city to city, to aſſiſt the ordinary preaching, in the converſion of* Pagans, *by the extraordinary miracles they pretended to perform.*

Characters given both by friends and enemies! Pray, Sir, what friends have you cited for this character? Or what enemies, except only *Celſus* the *Jew?* (And you are a miſerable interpreter for him.) So from the ſingle teſtimony of ſuch a witneſs,

† p. 20. ‡ p. 24.

witneſs, you lay it down as an oracular truth, that all the miracle-workers of the firſt three ages, were vagabonds and common cheats, rambling about from city to city, to aſſiſt in converting Heathens, by tricks and impoſture! And this you ingenuouſly call, *Throwing together all which the fathers have delivered concerning them!*

9. But to compleat all, † *Here again*, ſay you, *we ſee a diſpenſation of things aſcribed to God, quite different from that which we meet with in the New Teſtament. We ſee a diſpenſation!* Where? Not in the primitive church. Not in the writings of one ſingle Chriſtian: not of one Heathen; and only of one *Jew:* (for poor *Celſus* had not a ſecond; though he multiplies under your forming hand, into a cloud of witneſſes.) He alone aſcribes this to the antient Chriſtians, which you in their name aſcribe to God. With the ſame regard to truth you go on. *In thoſe days the power of working miracles* (you ſhould ſay, *The extraordinary gifts*) *was commmitted to none but thoſe who preſided in the church of* Chriſt. *Ipſe dixit*, for that. But I cannot take your word: eſpecially when the apoſtles and evangeliſts ſay otherwiſe. *But upon the pretended revival of thoſe powers*—Sir, we do not *pretend* the *revival* of them; ſeeing we ſhall believe they never were intermitted, till you can prove the contrary—— *We find the adminiſtration of them committed, not to thoſe who had the government of the church; not*

† p. 24.

not to the biſhops, the martyrs, or the principal champions of the Chriſtian cauſe, but to boys, to women, and above all, to "private and obſcure laymen:" not only of an inferior, but ſometimes alſo of a bad character.

Surely, Sir, you talk in your ſleep. You could never talk thus, if you had your eyes open, and your underſtanding about you. *We find the adminiſtration of them committed, not to thoſe who had the government of the church.* No! I thought *Cyprian* had had the government of the church at *Carthage*, and *Dionyſius* at *Alexandria!—Not to the biſhops.* Who were theſe then, that were mentioned laſt? Biſhops, or no biſhops?—*Not to the martyrs.* Well, if *Cyprian* was neither biſhop nor martyr, I hope you will allow *Juſtin*'s claim. *Not to the principal champions of the Chriſtian cauſe*—And yet you told us three pages ſince, that *theſe very fathers* were *the chief champions of the Chriſtian cauſe in thoſe days?—But to boys, and to women.* I anſwer, *This is that which was ſpoken of by the prophet* Joel, *It ſhall come to paſs, that I will pour out my Spirit*, ſaith the Lord, *and your ſons and your daughters ſhall propheſy!* A circumſtance which turns this argument full againſt you, till you openly avow you do not believe thoſe prophecies. *And above all to private and obſcure laymen, not only of an inferior, but ſometimes of a bad character.* I anſwer, 1. You cite only one *ante-nicene* writer, to prove them committed to *private and obſcure laymen.* And he

ſays

ſays this and no more, *generally † private men do things of this kind.* By what rule of grammar you conſtrue ἰδιῶται *private and obſcure laymen*, I know not. 2. To prove *theſe were ſometimes men of a bad character*, you quote alſo but one *antenicene* father. (For I preſume you will not aſſert the genuineneſs of the (ſo called) *apoſtolical conſtitutions.)* And that one is, in effect, none at all. It is *Tertullian*, who in his *preſcription againſt heretics*, ſays, ‡ *They will add many things of the authority* (or *power*) *of every heretical preacher: that they raiſed the dead, healed the ſick, foretold things to come.——They will add*—But did *Tertullian* believe them? There is no ſhadow of reaſon to think he did. And if not, what is all this to the purpoſe? No more than the tales of later ages which you add, concerning the miracles wrought by *bones and reliques.*

10. ‖ *Theſe things*, you add, *are ſo ſtrange, as to give juſt reaſon to ſuſpect, that there was ſome original fraud in the caſe, and that thoſe ſtrolling wonder-workers, by a dexterity of juggling, impoſed upon the pious fathers, whoſe ſtrong prejudices and ardent zeal for the intereſt of Chriſtianity, would diſpoſe them to embrace, without examination, whatever ſeemed to promote ſo good a cauſe.* You

† ὡς ἐπίπαν ἰδιῶται τὸ τοιοῦτον περάθεσαι.
Origen. Cont. Celſ. l. vii.

‡ Adjicient multa da autoritate cujuſque doctoris hæretici, illos mortuos ſuſcitaſſe, debiles reformaſſe, &c.

‖ p. 25.

You now ſpeak tolerably plain, and would be much diſappointed if thoſe, who have no ſtrong prejudices for Chriſtianity, did not apply what you ſay of theſe ſtrolling wonder-workers to the apoſtles, as well as their ſucceſſors.

11. A very ſhort anſwer will ſuffice. *Theſe things are ſo ſtrange.* They are more ſtrange than true. You have not proved one jot or title of them yet. Therefore the conſequences you draw muſt fall to the ground 'till you find them ſome better ſupport.

12. Nay, but ‡ *it is certain and notorious*, you ſay, *that this was really the caſe in ſome inſtances*: that is, that *ſtrolling, juggling, wonder-workers impoſed upon the pious fathers.* Sir, I muſt come in again with my cuckoo's note, the proof? Where is the proof? Till this is produced I cannot allow that this is certain and notorious, even in one individual inſtance.

* 13. Let us now ſtand ſtill and obſerve, what it is you have made out, under this ſecond head. What you propoſed was, *To throw together all which the primitive fathers had delivered, concerning the perſons ſaid to be then endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit.* And how have you executed what you propoſed? You have thrown together a quotation from a Jew, two from Heathens, three quarters of a line from Origen! and three lines from *Tertullian!* (nothing at

‡ p. 26.

at all, it is true, to the point in queſtion. But that you could not help.)

14. And this it ſeems, is § *all you have been able to draw, from any of the primitive writers, concerning the perſons who were endued with the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt!*

* Permit me, Sir, to apply to you, what was ſpoken on another occaſion. *Sir, the well is deep, and thou haſt nothing to draw:* neither ſufficient ſkill, nor induſtry and application. Beſides, you are reſolved to draw out of the well, what was never in it, and muſt of courſe loſe all your labour.

III. 1. You are, *Thirdly, to ſhew the particular characters and opinions of thoſe fathers who atteſt theſe gifts.*

Suffer me to remind you, that you mentioned nine of theſe, *Juſtin, Irenæus, Theophilus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen, Cyprian, Arnobius* and *Lanctantius.* You are therefore now to ſhew what were the *particular characters and opinions of theſe fathers.*

Indeed I ſhould think, their opinions had ſome ſmall relation to the queſtion. But ſince you think otherwiſe, I am prepared to hear you.

You premiſe, ‖ *That an unexceptionable witneſs muſt have* both judgment and honeſty: and then paſſing over the apoſtolic fathers (as ſuppoſing them

§ p. 21. ‖ p. 26.

them on your ſide) endeavour to ſhew, that theſe other fathers had neither.

2. You begin with † *Juſtin Martyr*, who, you ſay, *frequently affirms, that the miraculous gift of expounding the holy ſcriptures, or the myſteries of God, was granted to himſelf, by the ſpecial grace of God.* Upon which I obſerve, 1. It has not yet been agreed among learned men, that *declaring the myſteries of* God, is the ſame thing with *expounding the holy ſcriptures.* 2. It is not clear, that *Juſtin* does affirm, his being endued either with one or the other. At leaſt, not from the paſſages which you cite. The firſt, literally tranſlated, runs thus: § *He hath revealed to us whatſoever things we have underſtood by his grace from the ſcriptures alſo:* the other, ‡ *I have not any ſuch power; but* God *has given me the grace to underſtand his ſcriptures.* Now Sir, by which of theſe does it appear, that *Juſtin* affirms he had the *miraculous* gift of *expounding* the ſcriptures?

3. However *you* will affirm it, were it only to have the pleaſure of confuting it. In order to which you recite three paſſages from his writings, wherein he interprets ſcripture weakly enough: and then add (after a ſtrained compliment to Dr. *Grabe*, and a mingled tranſlation of one of his remarks)

† p. 27.

§ Ἀπεκάλυψεν ἔν ἡμῖν πάντα ὅσα κ᾽ ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν διά τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ γνοήκαμεν. Dial. par. 2.

‡ Οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναμις ἐμοὶ τοιαύτη τίς ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ χάρις παρὰ Θεοῦ ἐδόθη μοι εἰς τὸ συνιέναι τὰς γραφὰς αὐτοῦ. *ib.*

marks) § *His works are but little elſe than a wretched collection of interpretations of the ſame kind. Yet this pious father inſiſts, that they were all ſuggeſted to him from heaven.* No; neither the one nor the other. Neither do interpretations of ſcripture (good or bad) make the tenth part of his writings; nor does he inſiſt, that *all* thoſe which are found therein, *were ſuggeſted to him from heaven.* This does not follow from any paſſage you have cited yet: nor from his ſaying in a particular caſe, *Do you think I could have underſtood theſe things in the ſcriptures, if I had not by the will of God received the grace to underſtand them?*

4. However, now you clap your wings. ‡ *What credit*, ſay you, *can be due to this father, in the report of other peoples gifts, who was ſo groſly deceived, or willing at leaſt to deceive others, in this confident atteſtation of his own?* The anſwer is plain and obvious. It is not clear, that he atteſts his own at all. Conſequently, as yet his credit is unblemiſhed.

"But he did not underſtand Hebrew, and gave a wrong derivation of the Hebrew word, Satan." Allowing this, that he was no good etymologiſt, his credit as a witneſs may be as good as ever.

5. But to blaſt his credit for ever, you will now reckon up all the hereſies which he held. And firſt, † *He believed the doctrine of the Millennium;*

§ p. 30. ‡ p. 30. † p. 31.

nium ; or, " *That all the ſaints ſhould be raiſed in the fleſh, and reign with* Chriſt, *in the enjoyment of all ſenſual pleaſures, for a thouſand years before the general reſurrection.*" Theſe you mark as though they were *Juſtin*'s words. I take knowledge you hold, no faith is to be kept with heretics ; and that all means are fair which conduce to ſo good an end, as driving the Chriſtian hereſy out of the world.

It is by this principle only that I can account for your adding, *Which doctrine* [that of their enjoying all ſenſual pleaſures] *he deducts from the teſtimony of the prophets : and of St.* John *the apoſtle : and was followed in it by the fathers of the ſecond and third centuries.*

The doctrine (as you very well know) which *Juſtin deduced from the prophets and the apoſtles*, and *in which he was* undoubtedly *followed* by the fathers of the *ſecond and third centuries*, is this :

The ſouls of them who have been martyred for the witneſs of *Jeſus*, and for the word of God, and who have not worſhipped the beaſt, neither received his mark, ſhall live and reign with *Chriſt* a thouſand years.

But the reſt of the dead ſhall not live again, until the thouſand years are finiſhed.

Now to ſay, they believed this, is neither more nor leſs, than to ſay, they believed the bible.

6. The ſecond hereſy you charge him with is the believing, " † that thoſe *ſons* of God mentioned,

† p. 32.

mentioned, *Gen.* vi. 4. of whom it is there ſaid, *They came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them*; were evil angels." And I allow, he too lightly received this on the teſtimony of the *Jewiſh* commentators. But this only proves, that he was fallible man: not that he was a knave; or that he had not eyes and ears.

7. You charge him thirdly, with *treating the* ‡ *ſpurious books, publiſhed under the names of the* Sibyl *and* Hyſtaſpes, *with the ſame reverence as the prophetic ſcripture.* His words are, *By the power of evil ſpirits, it was made death, to read the books of* Hyſtaſpes, *or of the* Sibyl, *or of the prophets.* Well: how does this prove, that he *treated thoſe books with the ſame reverence as the propheitc ſcriptures?*

§ But *it is certain*, you ſay, *that from this example and authority of* Juſtin, *they were held in the higheſt veneration, by the fathers and rulers of the church, through all ſucceeding ages.*

I do not conceive, it is certain. I wait your proof, firſt, of the fact: next, of the reaſon you aſſign for it. The fact itſelf, that *theſe books were held in the higheſt veneration, by the fathers and rulers through all ſucceeding ages*, is in no wiſe proved by that ſingle quotation from ‖ *Clemens Alexandrinus*, wherein he urges the Heathens with the teſtimonies of their own authors, of the

‡ p. 23. § p. ibid. ‖ p. 34.

the *Sibyl*, and of *Hyſtaſpes*. We cannot infer from hence, that he himſelf held *them in the higheſt veneration*: much leſs, that all the fathers did. And as to the reaſon you aſſign for that veneration, the example and authority of *Juſtin*, you cite no writer of any kind, good or bad. So he that will believe it may.

But *ſome* you tell us, *impute the forging of theſe books to* Juſtin. Be pleaſed to tell us likewiſe, who thoſe are; and what grounds they alledge for that imputation. Till then it can be of no ſignification.

8. You charge him, fourthly, "¶ With believing that ſilly ſtory, concerning the ſeptuagint verſion of the *Old Teſtament*: with ſaying, that he himſelf, when at Alexandria, ſaw the remains of the cells in which the tranſlators were ſhut up: and with making a conſiderable miſtake in the chronology relating thereto." And if all this be allowed, and over and above, that he "frequently cites apocryphal books, and cites the ſcripture by memory:" what have you gained toward the proof of your grand concluſion, that "he was either too great a fool, or too great a knave, to be believed touching a plain matter of fact?"

9. You ſeem ſenſible of this, and therefore add fifthly, † *It will be ſaid perhaps, that theſe inſtances ſhew a weakneſs of judgment, but do not touch the credit of Juſtin as a witneſs of fact.* But can you ſcrape up nothing from all the dunghill's

¶ p. 37. † p. 29.

of antiquity that does? I dare say, you will do your utmost. And, first, you reply, *The want of judgment alone may, in some cases, disqualify a man from being a good witness.* Thus *Justin himself was imposed upon by those of* Alexandria, *who shewed him some old ruins under the name of cells. And so he was by those who told him,* ‖ *there was a statue at* Rome, *inscribed* Simoni Deo Sancto; *whereas it was really inscribed,* Semoni Sanco Deo; *to an old deity of the* Sabines ¶. Now, say you, *if he was deceived in such obvious facts, how much the more easily would he be deceived by subtle and crafty impostors?* Far less easily. A man of good judgment may be deceived in the inscriptions of statues and points of antient history. But if he has only eyes and ears, and a small degree of common sense, he cannot be deceived in facts where he is both an eye and ear-witness.

10. For a parting blow, you endeavour to prove, sixthly, that *Justin* was a knave as well as a fool. To this end you remark, "That he charges the *Jews* with erazing three passages out of the Greek bible; one whereof stands there still, and the other two were not expunged by some *Jew*, but added by some Christian. Nay, that *able critic and divine* John Croius [you know when to bestow honourable appellations] says, Justin *forged and published this passage, for the confirmation of the Christian doctrine, as well as the greatest*

‖ p. 40. ¶ p. 41.

greateſt part of the ſibylline *oracles, and the ſentences of* Mercurius.

With far greater probability than *John Croius* aſſerts, that *Juſtin* forged theſe paſſages, a man of candor would hope that he read them in his copy (though incorrect) of the Greek bible. And till you diſprove this, or prove the aſſertion of *Croius*, you are got not a jot farther ſtill. But notwithſtanding you have taken true pains to blacken him, both with regard to his morals and underſtanding, he may ſtill be an honeſt man, and an unexceptionable witneſs, as to plain facts done before his face.

11. You fall upon ‡ *Irenæus* next, and carefully enumerate all the miſtakes in his writings. As firſt, that he held the doctrine of the millennium, and related a weak fancy of *Papias* concerning it. Secondly, that he believed our Saviour to have lived fifty years. Thirdly, that he believed *Enoch* and *Elias* were tranſlated, and St. *Paul* caught up to that very paradiſe from which *Adam* was expelled; (ſo he might, and *all the later fathers* with him, without being either the better or the worſe.) Fourthly, that he believed the ſtory concerning the ſeptuagint verſion: nay, and that the ſcriptures were *deſtroyed* in the *Babyloniſh* captivity, but reſtored again after ſeventy years by *Eſdras*, inſpired for that purpoſe. *In this alſo* [you ſay, but do not prove] *he was followed by all the principal fathers that ſucceeded him;*

‡ P. 44.

him; although there is no better foundation for it, than that fabulous relation in the second book of Esdras. You add, fifthly, that "he believed the sons of God, who came in to the daughters of men, were evil angels:" And all the early fathers, you are very ready to believe, *were drawn into the same errors, by the authority of the apocryphal book of Enoch, cited by St. Jude.*

12. It is not only out of your good will to St. *Jude*, or *Irenæus*, you gather up these fragments of error, that nothing be lost, but also to the whole body of the antient Christians. For *all those absurdities, you say, were taught by the fathers of those ages*, (naturally implying, by all the fathers) *as doctrines of the universal church derived immediately from the apostles; and thought so necessary, that those who held the contrary, were hardly considered as real Christians.* Here I must beg you to prove as well as assert, 1. That all these absurdities of the millennium in the grossest sense of it, of the age of Christ, of paradise, of the destruction of the scriptures, of the septuagint version, and of evil angels mixing with women were taught by all the fathers of those ages; 2. That all those fathers taught these as doctrines of the universal church, derived immediately from the apostles; and 3. That they all denied those to be real Christians, who held the contrary.

13. You next cite two far-fetched interpretations of scripture, and a weak saying out of the writings of *Irenæus*. But all three prove no more,

more, than that in these instances he did not speak with strictness of judgment: not, that he was incapable of knowing what he saw with his own eyes, or of truly relating it to others.

Before we proceed to what with equal good humour and impartiality you remark concerning the rest of these fathers, it will be proper to consider what more is *interspersed* concerning these *in the sequel of this argument.*

14. And, first, you say, " † *Justin* used an inconclusive argument for the existence of the souls of men after death." It is possible he might, but whether it was conclusive or no, this does not affect his moral character.

You say, secondly, ‡ *It was the common opinion of all the fathers, taken from the authority of Justin Martyr, that the dæmons wanted the fumes of the sacrifices to strengthen them for the enjoyment of their lustful pleasures.*

Sir, no man of reason will believe this concerning one of the fathers, upon your bare assertion. I must therefore desire you to prove by more than a scrap of a sentence, 1. That *Justin* himself held this opinion; 2. That he invented it; 3. That it was the common opinion of all the fathers, and 4. That they all took it on his authority.

15. You affirm, thirdly, § *He says, that all devils yield and submit to the name of Jesus: as*

† p. 67. ‡ p. 69. § p. 85.

alſo to the name of the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob. Very likely he may.

Laſtly, you cite a paſſage from him, concerning the Spirit of God influencing the minds of holy men. But neither does this in any meaſure affect his credit as a witneſs of fact. Conſequently, after *all* that you *have been able to draw*, either from himſelf, or *any of the primitive writers*, here is one witneſs of unqueſtionable credit, touching the miracles wrought in the primitive church, touching the ſubſiſtence of the extraordinary gifts after the days of the apoſtles.

16. But let us come once more to *Irenæus*; for you have not done with him yet. ‖ *Forgery*, you ſay, *has been actually charged upon Juſtin*, (by *John Croius* and Dr. *Middleton*) *and may with equal reaſon be charged on Irenæus. For what other account can be given of his frequent appeals to apoſtolical tradition, for the ſupport of ſo many incredible doctrines?* Why, this very natural one, that in non-eſſential points he too eaſily followed the authority of *Papias*, a weak man, who on ſlight grounds believed many trifling things to have been ſaid or done by the apoſtles. And allowing all this, yet it does not give us ſo ¶ *lamentable an idea of thoſe primitive ages and primitive champions of the Chriſtian cauſe.*

The ſame account may be given of his miſtake † concerning the age of our Lord. There is therefore as yet neither reaſon nor any plauſible pretence

‖ p. 111. ¶ p. 59. † ibid.

pretence for laying forgery to his charge. And consequently, thus far his credit as a witness stands clear and unimpeached.

But you say, secondly, ‡ *He was a zealous asserter of tradition.* He might be so, and yet be an honest man: and that, whether he was mistaken or no, in § supposing *Papias* to have been a disciple of *John* the apostle.

You say, thirdly, He supposed ‖ *that the disciples of Simon Magus, as well as of Carpocrates, used magical arts:* that ¶ *the dead were frequently raised in his time:* that † *the Jews by the name of* God *cast out devils:* and that *many had even then the gift of tongues, although he had it not himself.* This is the whole of your charge against *Irenæus*, when summed up and laid together. And now let any reasonable person judge, whether all this gives us the least cause to question, either his having sense enough to discern a plain matter of fact, or honesty enough to relate it. Here then is one more credible witness of miraculous gifts after the days of the apostles.

18. What you advance concerning the history of tradition, I am neither concerned to defend nor to confute. Only I must observe, you forgat yourself again ‡‡ where you say, *the fable of the* Millennium, *of the old age of* Christ, *with many more, were all embraced by the earliest fathers.* For modesty's sake, Sir, think a little before you

 speak,

‡ p. 61. § p. 64. ‖ p. 68. ¶ p. 72. † p. 85. ‡‡ p. 64.

ſpeak, and remember you yourſelf informed us, that one of theſe was never embraced at all, but by one ſingle father only.

19. § *I cannot*, you ſay, *diſmiſs this article, without taking notice, that witchcraft was univerſally believed through all ages of the primitive church.* This you ſhew by citations from ſeveral of the fathers: who likewiſe believed, as you inform us, that ‖ *evil ſpirits had power frequently to afflict either the bodies or minds of men:* that they *acted the parts of the Heathen gods, and aſſumed the forms of thoſe who were called from the dead. Now this opinion*, ſay you, *is not only a proof of the groſſeſt credulity, but of that ſpecies of it, which, of all others, lays a man moſt open to impoſture.*

* And yet this opinion, as you know full well, has its foundation not only in the hiſtories of all ages, and all nations throughout the habitable world, even where Chriſtianity never obtained; but particularly in ſcripture; in abundance of paſſages both of the Old and New Teſtament: as where the *Iſraelites* were ¶ expreſly commanded not to *ſuffer a witch to live*; † where St. *Paul* numbers *witchcraft* with *the works of the fleſh*, and ranks it with adultery and idolatry: and ‡ where St. *John* declares, *without are ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers.*

That *the* §§ *gods of the Heathens are devils*, is declared

§ p. 66. ‖ p. 70. ¶ —— † Gal. v. 19, 20. ‡ Rev. xxii. 15. §§ 1 Cor.

declared in terms, by one of thoſe who are ſtiled inſpired writers. And many conceive, that another of them gives us a ‖ plain inſtance of their *aſſuming the form of thoſe who were called from the dead.*

Of the power of evil ſpirits to afflict the minds of men, none can doubt who believe there are any ſuch beings. And of their power to afflict the body we have abundant proof both in the hiſtory of *Job*, and that of the goſpel demoniacs.

I do not mean, Sir, to accuſe *you* of believing theſe things: you have ſhewn, that you are guiltleſs in this matter; and that you pay no more regard to that antiquated book, the bible, than you do to the ſecond book of *Eſdras*. But, alas! The fathers were not ſo far enlightened. And becauſe they were bigotted to that old book, they of conſequence held for truth, what you aſſure us was mere deluſion and impoſture.

20. Now to apply. ¶ *A mind*, you ſay, *ſo totally poſſeſt by ſuperſtitious fancies, could not even ſuſpect the pretenſions of thoſe vagrant jugglers, who in thoſe primitive ages were ſo numerous and ſo induſtriouſly employed in deluding their fellow creatures. Both Heathens, Jews, and Chriſtians are all allowed to have had ſuch impoſtors among them.* By whom, Sir, is this allowed of the Chriſtians? By whom, but *Celſus*, was it ever affirmed of them? Who informed you of

‖ 1 Sam. xxviii. 13, 14. ¶ p. 71.

their growing ſo *numerous?* And uſing ſuch *induſtry* in their employment? To ſpeak the plain truth, your *mind* appears to be *ſo totally poſſeſt by* theſe *vagrant jugglers*, that you cannot ſay one word about the primitive church, but they immediately ſtart up before you; though there is no more proof of their ever exiſting, than of a witch's ſailing in an egg ſhell.

21. You conclude this head; † *When pious Chriſtians are arrived to this pitch of credulity, as to believe that evil ſpirits, or evil men can work miracles in oppoſition to the goſpel; their very piety will oblige them to admit as miraculous, whatever is pretended to be wrought in defence of it.* Once more you have ſpoken out: you have ſhewn without diſguiſe, what you think of St. *Paul* and the ‡ *lying miracles*, which he (poor man!) believed evil ſpirits or evil men could work in oppoſition to the goſpel; and of St. *John*, talking ſo idly of him who § *doeth great wonders, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth* (even though they were not Chriſtians) *by means of thoſe miracles which he hath power to do.*

22. You have now finiſhed the third thing you propoſed, which was, *To ſhew the particular characters of the ſeveral fathers, who atteſt* that they were eye and ear-witneſſes of the extraordinary gifts in the primitive church.

You named nine of theſe, *Juſtin Martyr, Irenæus, Theophilus, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, Origen,*

† p. 71. ‡ 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. § Rev. xiii. 13, 14.

Origen, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, and *Lanctantius*; at the ſame time obſerving, that many other writers atteſt the ſame thing.

But let the others ſtand by. Are theſe good men and true? That is the preſent queſtion.

You ſay, No. And to prove that theſe *nine* are knaves, bring ſeveral charges againſt *two* of them.

Theſe have been anſwered at large; ſome of them proved to be falſe; ſome, though true, yet not invalidating their evidence.

But ſuppoſing we wave the evidence of theſe two, here are ſeven more ſtill to come.

Oh! but you ſay, "If there were twice ſeven, they only repeat the words which thoſe have taught them."

You ſay, But how often muſt you be reminded, that ſaying and proving are two things? I grant, in three or four opinions, ſome (though not all) of theſe were miſtaken as well as thoſe two. But this by no means proves, that they were all knaves together; or that if *Juſtin Martyr* or *Irenæus* ſpeaks wrong, I am therefore to give no credit to the evidence of *Theophilus* or *Minutius Felix*.

23. You have therefore made a more lame piece of work on this head, (if poſſible) than on the preceding. You have promiſed great things, and performed juſt nothing. You have left above three parts in four of your work intirely

untouched; as these two are not a fourth part even of the writers you have named, as attesting the continuance of the *extraordinary gifts* after the age of the apostles.

* But you have taught that trick at least to your *vagrant jugglers*, to supply the defect of all other arguments. At every dead lift you are sure to play upon us these dear creatures of your own imagination. They are the very strength of your battle, the tenth legion. Yet if a man impertinently calls for proof of their existence, if he comes close and engages hand to hand, they immediately vanish away.

IV. You are, in the fourth place, to ‖ *review all the several kinds of miraculous gifts which are pretended to have been given; and to observe from the nature of each, how far they may reasonably be suspected.*

These, you say, are 1. *The power of raising the dead*, 2. *Of healing the sick*, 3. *Of casting out devils*, 4. *Of prophesying*, 5. *Of seeing visions*, 6. *Of discovering the secrets of men*, 7. *Of expounding the scriptures*, 8. *Of speaking with tongues.*

I had rather have had *an account of the miraculous powers as they are represented to us in the history of the gospel.* But that account you are not inclined to give. So we will make the best of what we have.

Sect. I.

‖ p. 72.

Sect. I. 1. And, first, As to *raising the dead.* Irenæus affirms, *This was frequently performed on necessary occasions; when by great fastings and the joint supplication of the church, the spirit of the dead person returned into him, and the man was given back to the prayers of the saints.*

* 2. But you object, † *There is not an instance of this to be found in the three first centuries.* I presume you mean, no Heathen historian has mentioned it (for Christian historians were not.) I answer, 1. 'Tis not probable a Heathen historian would have related such a fact, had he known it. 2. 'Tis equally improbable, he should know it: seeing the Christians knew with whom they had to do: and that, had such an instance been made public, they would not long have enjoyed him who had been given back to their prayers. They could not but remember what had been before; when the Jews saught Lazarus also to kill him: a very obvious reason why a miracle of this particular kind ought not to have been published abroad: especially, considering, thirdly, That it was not designed for the conversion of the Heathens; but on occasions necessary for the good of the church, of the Christian community. Lastly, It was a miracle proper above all others, to support and confirm the Christians, who were daily tortured and slain, but sustained by the hope of obtaining a better resurrection.

3. You object, secondly, ‡ *The Heathens constantly*

† p. 72. ‡ p. 73.

ſtantly affirmed the thing itſelf to be impoſſible. They did ſo. But is it a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the dead?

4. You object, thirdly, That when *Autolycus*§, *an eminent Heathen, ſcarce forty years after this, ſaid to* Theophilus *biſhop of* Antioch, "*Shew me but one raiſed from the dead, that I may ſee and believe*;" Theophilus could not. Suppoſing he could not, I do not ſee that this contradicts the teſtimony of *Irenæus*; for he does not affirm (though you ‖ ſay, he does) that this was *performed, as it were, in every pariſh, or place where there was a Chriſtian church.* He does not affirm, that it was performed at *Antioch:* probably, not in any church, unleſs where a concurrence of important circumſtances required it. Much leſs does he affirm, that the perſons raiſed in France, would be alive forty years after. Therefore although it be granted, 1. That the hiſtorians of that age are ſilent, 2. That the Heathens ſaid, the thing was impoſſible, and, 3. That *Theophilus* did not anſwer the challenge of the Heathen *Autolycus:* all this will not invalidate in any degree, the expreſs teſtimony of *Irenæus*, or prove, that none have been raiſed from the dead, ſince the days of the apoſtles.

Sect. II. 1. ¶ *The next gift is, that of healing the ſick; often performed by anointing them with oil: in favour of which,* as you obſerve, *the ancient*

§ p. 73. ‖ p. 72. ¶ p. 75.

tient teſtimonies are more full and expreſs. But † *this*, you ſay, *might be accounted for without a miracle, by the natural efficacy of the oil itſelf.* I doubt not. Be pleaſed to try, how many you can cure thus, that are blind, deaf, dumb, or paralytic: and experience, if not philoſophy, will teach you, that oil has no ſuch natural efficacy as this.

2. Of this you ſeem not inſenſible already, and therefore fly away to your favourite ſuppoſition, that "they were not cured at all: that the whole matter was a cheat from the beginning to the end." But by what arguments do you evince this? The firſt is, ‡ *The Heathens pretended to do the ſame.* Nay, and *managed the impoſture with ſo much art, that the Chriſtians could neither deny nor detect it: but inſiſted always, that it was performed by demons, or evil ſpirits.* But ſtill the Heathens maintained, *The cures were wrought by their gods, by* Æſculapius *in particular.* And where is the difference? Seeing, as was obſerved before, *the gods of the Heathens were* but *devils.*

3. But, you ſay, § *Although public monuments were erected in proof and memory of theſe cures, at the time when they were performed, yet it is certain all thoſe Heathen miracles were pure forgeries.* How is it certain? If you can ſwallow this without good proof, you are far more credulous than I. I cannot believe, that the whole body of the Heathens, for ſo many generations, were utterly

† p. 76. ‡ ibid. § p. 79.

ly deſtitute of common ſenſe, any more than of common honeſty. Why ſhould you fix ſuch a charge on whole cities and countries? You could have done no more, if they had been Chriſtians!

4. But † *diſeaſes thought fatal and deſperate, are oft ſurprizingly healed of themſelves.* And therefore *we cannot pay any great regard to ſuch ſtories, unleſs we knew more precifely in this caſe the real bounds between nature and miracle.* Sir, I underſtand you well. The drift of the argument is eaſily ſeen. It points at the Maſter as well as his ſervants: and tends to prove, that, after all this talk about miraculous cures, we are not ſure there were ever any in the world. But it will do no harm. For although we grant, 1. That ſome recover, even in ſeemingly deſperate caſes, and, 2. That we do not know in any caſe, the preciſe bounds between nature and miracle: yet it does not follow, therefore I cannot be aſſured, there ever was a miracle of healing in the world. To explain this by inſtance. I do not preciſely know, how far nature may go, in healing, that is, reſtoring ſight to the blind. Yet this I aſſuredly know, that if a man born blind, is reſtored to ſight by a word, this is not nature, but miracle. And to ſuch a ſtory, well atteſted, all reaſonable men will pay the higheſt regard.

5. The ſum of what you have advanced on this head, is, 1. That the Heathens themſelves had miraculous cures among them; 2. That oil

† p. 79.

oil may cure ſome diſeaſes by its natural efficacy, and, 3. That we do not know the preciſe bounds of nature. All this I allow. But all this will not prove that no miraculous cures were performed, either by our Lord and his apoſtles, or by thoſe who lived in the three ſucceeding centuries.

Sect. III. 1. The third of the miraculous powers ſaid to have been in the primitive church, is that of caſting out devils. The teſtimonies concerning this are out of number, and as plain as words can make them. To ſhew therefore, that all theſe ſignify nothing, and that there were never any devils caſt out at all (neither by the apoſtles, nor ſince the apoſtles, for the argument proves both or neither) is a taſk worthy of you. And (to give you your juſt praiſe) you have here put forth all your ſtrength.

2. And yet I cannot but apprehend, there was a much ſhorter way. Would it not have been readier to overthrow all thoſe teſtimonies at a ſtroke, by proving, there never was any devil in the world? Then the whole affair of caſting him out had been at an end.

But it is in condeſcenſion to the weakneſs and prejudices of mankind, that you go leſs out of the common road, and only obſerve, "That thoſe who were ſaid to be poſſeſt of the devil, may have been ill of the falling ſickneſs." And

their ſymptoms, you ſay, † *ſeem to be nothing elſe but the ordinary ſymptoms of an epilepſy.*

If it be aſked, but were ‡ *the ſpeeches and confeſſions of the devils, and their anſwering to all queſtions, nothing but the ordinary ſymptoms of an epilepſy?* You take in a ſecond hypotheſis, and account for theſe *by the arts of impoſture and contrivance, between the perſons concerned in the act.*

But is not this ſomething extraordinary, that men in epileptic fits, ſhould be capable of ſo much art and contrivance? To get over this difficulty, we are to ſuppoſe that art and contrivance were the main ingredients; ſo that we are to add only *quantum ſufficet* of the epilepſy, and ſometimes to leave it out of the compoſition.

But the proof, Sir, where is the proof? I want a little of that too. Inſtead of this we have only another ſuppoſition, § *That all the fathers were either induced by their prejudices, to give too haſty credit to theſe pretended poſſeſſions, or carried away by their zeal to ſupport a deluſion, which was uſeful to the Chriſtian cauſe.*

I grant, they were prejudiced in favour of the bible. But yet we cannot fairly conclude from hence, either that they were one and all continually deceived by merely pretended poſſeſſions: or, that they would all lie for God, a thing abſolutely forbidden in that book.

3. But

† p. 81. ‡ p. 82. § p. 81.

3. But ‖ *leaders of ſects*, you, ſay, *whatever principles they pretend to, have ſeldom ſcrupled to uſe a commodious lie.* I obſerve you are quite impartial here. You make no exception of age or nation. 'Tis all one to you, whether your reader applies this to the ſon of *Abdalla*, or the ſon of *Mary*. And yet, Sir, I cannot but think there was a difference. I fancy the Jew was an honeſter man than the *Arabian:* and tho' *Mahomet* uſed many a *commodious lie*, yet *Jeſus of Nazareth* did not.

4. However, ¶ *Not one of theſe fathers made any ſcruple of uſing the hyperbolical ſtyle*, (that is, in plain *Engliſh*, of lying) *as an eminent writer of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory declares.* You ſhould have ſaid an impartial writer. For who would ſcruple that character to Mr. *Le Clerc?* And yet I cannot take either his or your bare word for this. Be pleaſed to produce a little proof. Hitherto you have proved abſolutely nothing on the head, but (as your manner is) taken all for granted.

5. You next relate that famous ſtory from *Tertullian.* † *A woman went to the theatre and returned poſſeſt with a devil. When the unclean ſpirit was aſked, how he dared to aſſault a Chriſtian? He anſwered, I found her on my own ground.* After relating another (which you endeavour to account for naturally) you intimate, that this was a mere lie of *Tertullian's*. But how is that proved? Why, *Tertullian was an utter enemy to plays*

‖ p. 83. ¶ ibid. † p. 83.

plays and public ſhows in the theatre. He was ſo. But can we infer from thence, that he was an utter enemy to common honeſty?

6. You add, § *The fathers themſelves own, that even the* Jews, *yea and the* Heathens, *caſt out devils. Now it will be granted,* ‖ *that theſe* Jewiſh *and Heathen exorciſts were mere cheats and impoſtors. But the fathers believed, they really caſt them out. Now if they could take their tricks for the effects of a ſupernatural power, well might they be deceived by their own impoſtors. Or,* ¶ *they might think it convenient to oppoſe one cheat to another.*

Deceived, ſay you, *by their impoſtors?* Why I thought they were the very men who ſet them to work! Who oppoſed one cheat to another. Apt ſcholars, who acted their part ſo well, as even to deceive their maſters! But whatever the Heathen were, we cannot grant, that all the *Jewiſh exorciſts were impoſtors.* Whether the Heathens caſt out devils or not, 'tis ſure the *ſons* of the *Jews caſt them out.* I mean, upon ſuppoſition, that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* caſt them out: which is a point not here to be diſputed.

7. But *it is very hard to believe what* Origen *declares, that the devils uſed to poſſeſs and deſtroy cattle.* You might have ſaid, what *Matthew* and *Mark* declare, concerning the herd of ſwine. And yet we ſhall find you by and by believing far harder things than this.

Before

§ p. 84. ‖ p. 87. ¶ p. 88.

Before you ſubjoined the ſilly ſtory of *Hilarion* and his camel, you ſhould in candor have informed your reader, that it is diſputed, whether the life of *Hilarion* was wrote by St. *Jerom* or no? But be it as it may, I have no concern with either. For they did not live within the three firſt ages.

8. I know not what you have *proved* hitherto, though you have *affirmed* many things, and *intimated* more. But now we come to the ſtrength of the cauſe, contained in your five obſervations.

† You obſerve, *firſt*, "*That all the primitive accounts of caſting out devils, though given by different fathers, and in different ages*, yet exactly agree with regard to all the main circumſtances." And this you apprehend to be a mark of impoſture. *It looks*, you ſay, *as if they copied from each other!* Now a vulgar-reader would have imagined, that any ſingle account of this kind muſt be rendered much more (not leſs) credible, by parallel accounts of what many had ſeverally ſeen, at different times, and in different places.

9. You obſerve, ſecondly, ‡ *That the perſons thus poſſeſt, were called*, Ἐγγαστριμύθοι, *ventriloquiſts*; (ſome of them were) *becauſe they were generally believed to ſpeak out of the belly. Now* § *there are at this day*, you ſay, *thoſe who by art and practice can ſpeak in the ſame manner. If we ſuppoſe then that there were artiſts of this kind among the antient Chriſtians*,

† p. 92. ‡ ibid. § p. 92.

Chriſtians, how eaſily, by a correſpondence between the ventriloquiſt and the exorciſt, might they delude the moſt ſenſible of their audience?

But what did the *ventriloquiſt* do with his *epilepſy* in the mean time? You muſt not let it go. Becauſe many of the circumſtances wherein all theſe accounts agree, cannot be tolerably accounted for without it. And yet how will you make theſe two agree? 'Tis a point worthy your ſerious conſideration.

But cheats doubtleſs they were, account for it who can. Yet it is ſtrange, none of the Heathens ſhould find them out: that the impoſture ſhould remain quite undiſcovered till fourteen hundred years after the impoſtors were dead! He muſt have a very large faith, who can believe this: who can ſuppoſe, that not one of all thoſe impoſtors, ſhould either through inadvertence, or in the midſt of tortures and death, have once intimated any ſuch thing.

10. You obſerve, thirdly, † *That many demoniacs could not be cured by all the power of the exorciſts, and that the cures which were pretended to be wrought on any, were but temporary; were but the ceſſation of a particular fit, or acceſs of the diſtemper. This*, you ſay, *is evident from the teſtimony of antiquity itſelf, and may be clearly collected from the method of treating them in the antient church.*

Sir, you are the moſt obliging diſputant in the world;

† p. 92.

world: for you continually anſwer your own arguments. Your laſt obſervation confuted all that you had advanced before. And now you are ſo kind as to confute that. For if, after all, theſe demoniacs were real epileptics, and that in ſo high a degree as to be wholly incredible, what becomes of their art and practice? And of the very good correſpondence between the ventriloquiſt and the exorciſt?

Having allowed you your ſuppoſition juſt ſo long, as may ſuffice to confute yourſelf, I muſt now obſerve, it is not true. For all that *is evident from the teſtimony of antiquity* is this: that although many demoniacs were wholly delivered, yet ſome who were not, particularly in the third century: but continued months or years, with only intervals of eaſe, before they were intirely ſet at liberty.

11. You obſerve, fourthly, ‡ *That great numbers of demoniacs ſubſiſted in thoſe early ages, whoſe chief habitation was in a part of the church, where, as in a kind of hoſpital, they were under the care of the exorciſts.*—§ *Which will account for the confidence of thoſe challenges made to the Heathens by the Chriſtians, to come and ſee how they could drive the devils out of them, while they kept ſuch numbers of them in conſtant pay: always ready for the ſhow; tried and diſciplined by your exorciſts to groan and howl, and give proper anſwers to all queſtions.*

So

‡ p. 94. § p. 95.

* So now *the correſpondence between the ventriloquiſt and the exorciſt* is grown more cloſe than ever! But the misfortune is, this obſervation likewiſe wholly overthrows that which went before it. For if all the groaning and howling and other ſymptoms, were no more than what they † *were diſciplined to by their exorciſts*; then it cannot be, that *many* ‡ *of them could not poſſibly be cured by all the power of thoſe exorciſts.* What! *could* they *not poſſibly* be taught to know their maſters? And when to end as well as when to begin the ſhow? One would think, that the cures wrought upon theſe might have been more than temporary. Nay, it is ſurpriſing, that while they had ſuch numbers of them they ſhould ever ſuffer the ſame perſon to *ſhew* twice.

12. You obſerve, fifthly, § *That whereas this power of caſting out devils, had hitherto been in the hands only of the meaner part of the laity:* (that wants proof) *it was, about the year* 367, *put under the direction of the clergy; it being then decreed by the council of* Laodicea, *that none ſhould be exorciſts but thoſe appointed (or ordained) by the biſhop. But no ſooner was this done, even by thoſe who favoured and deſired to ſupport it, than the gift itſelf gradually decreaſed and expired.*

You here overthrow not only your immediately preceding obſervation (as uſual) but likewiſe what you have obſerved elſewhere, " ‖ That the *exorciſts* began to be ordained *about the middle of the*

† p. 95. ‡ p. 92. § p. 95. ‖ p. 86.

the third century." If ſo, what need of decreeing it now, above an hundred years after? Again, if the exorciſts were ordained an hundred years before this council ſat, what change was made by the decree of the council? Or how came the power of caſting out devils to ceaſe upon it? You ſay, the biſhops *ſtill favoured and deſired to ſupport it.* Why then did they not ſupport it? It muſt have been they (not the poor exorciſts, who were but a degree above ſextons) who had hitherto *kept ſuch numbers of them in pay.* What was become of them now? Were all the groaners and howlers dead? And no more to be procured for money? Or rather, did not the biſhops, think you, grow covetous as they grew rich, and ſo *kept* fewer and fewer of them *in pay*, till at length the whole buſineſs dropped?

13. Theſe are your laboured objections againſt the great promiſe of our Lord, *In my name ſhall they caſt out devils:* whereby (to make ſure work) you ſtrike at him and his apoſtles, juſt as much as at the primitive fathers. But by a ſtrange jumble of ideas in your head, you would prove ſo much that you prove nothing. By attempting to ſhew, all who claimed this power to be at once both fools and knaves, you have ſpoiled your whole cauſe, and, in the event, neither ſhewn them to be one nor the other: as the one half of your argument all along juſt ſerves to overthrow the other. So

that after all, the antient teſtimonies touching this gift, remain firm and unſhaken.

Sect. IV. 1. You told us above, ¶ That *the fourth miraculous gift was that of propheſying*, the fifth of *ſeeing viſions*, the ſixth of *diſcovering the ſecrets of men*. But here you jumble them all together, telling us, † *The next miraculous gift is that of prophetic viſions, and extatic trances (extatic extaſies* you might have ſaid) *and the diſcovery of mens hearts*. But why do you thruſt all three into one? Becauſe, you ſay, *theſe ſeem to be the fruit of one ſpirit*. Moſt certainly they are, whether it was the ſpirit of truth, or (as you ſuppoſe) the ſpirit of deluſion.

2. However it is the ſecond of theſe on which you chiefly dwell, (the fifth of thoſe you before enumerated) taking but little notice of the fourth, *foretelling things to come*, and none at all of the ſixth, *diſcovering the ſecrets of men*. The teſtimonies therefore for theſe remain in full force, as you do not even attempt to invalidate them. With regard to *viſions* or *extaſies*, you obſerve firſt, That *Tertullian* calls *extaſy*, ‡ *a temporary loſs of ſenſes*. It was ſo, of the outward ſenſes, which were then locked up. You obſerve, ſecondly, That *Suidas* (a very primitive writer, who lived between eight and nine hundred years after *Tertullian*) *ſays, That of all the kinds of madneſs, that of the poets and prophets was alone to be wiſhed for.*

¶ p. 72. † p. 96. ‡ p. 97.

for. I am at a loſs to know what this is brought to prove. The queſtion is, were there viſions in the primitive church? You obſerve, thirdly, That *Philo* the *Jew* ſays, (I literally tranſlate his words, which you do not, for it would not anſwer your purpoſe) § *When divine light ſhines, the human ſets; but when that ſets, this riſes. This uſes to befall the prophets.* Well, Sir, and what is this to the queſtion? Why, *from theſe teſtimonies*, you ſay, *we may collect, that the viſion or extaſy of the primitive church was of the ſame kind with that of the Delphic Pythia, or the Cumæan Sibyl.*

Well collected indeed! But I deſire a little better teſtimony, than either that of *Philo* the *Jew*, or *Suidas*, a Lexicographer of the eleventh century, before I believe this. How little *Tertullian* is to be regarded on this head you yourſelf ſhew in the very next page.

3. You ſay, fourthly, *Montanus and his aſſociates were the authors of theſe trances. They firſt raiſed this ſpirit of enthuſiaſm in the church, and acquired great credit by their viſions and extaſies.* Sir, you forget; they did not *raiſe this ſpirit*, but rather *Joel* and St. *Peter*; according to whoſe words, the *young men ſaw viſions*, before *Montanus* was born.

You obſerve, fifthly, How ‖ *Tertullian* was *impoſed upon by the craft of extatic viſionaries*, and then fall upon *Cyprian* with all your

§ p. 98. ‖ p. 99.

might: your objections to whom we ſhall not conſider.

And, firſt, you lay it down as a poſtulatum, that he was *fond of power and epiſcopal authority*. I cannot grant this, Sir, I muſt have ſome proof. Elſe this, and all you infer from it, will go for nothing.

You ſay, ſecondly, *In all queſtionable points of doctrine or diſcipline, which he had a mind to introduce into the Chriſtian worſhip, we find him conſtantly appealing to the teſtimony of viſions and divine revelations. Thus he ſays to* Cœcilius, *that he was divinely admoniſhed to mix water with wine in the ſacrament, in order to render it effectual.*

You ſet out unhappily enough. For this can never be a proof of *Cyprian*'s appealing to viſions and revelations in order to *introduce queſtionable points* of doctrine or diſcipline *into the Chriſtian worſhip*: becauſe this point was unqueſtionable, and could not then be *introduced into the Chriſtian worſhip*, having had a conſtant place therein (as ¶ you yourſelf have ſhewed) at leaſt from the time of *Juſtin Martyr*.

Indeed, neither *Juſtin* nor *Cyprian* uſe thoſe words, *In order to render it effectual*. They are an ingenious and honeſt addition of your own, in order to make ſomething out of nothing.

5. I obſerve you take much the ſame liberty in your next quotation from *Cyprian*. † *He threatens,*

¶ Introd. Diſc. p. 57. † p. 102.

threatens, you say, *to execute*, " What he was ordered to do *against them in a vision*." Here also the last words, *in a vision*, are an improvement upon the text. *Cyprian*'s words are, ‡ *I will use that admonition which the* Lord *commands me to use*. But neither was this in order to introduce any *questionable point*, either of doctrine or discipline; no more than his *using the same threat to Pupianus, who had* spoken ill of him and left his communion.

6. You go on. *He says likewise, he was admonished of God, to ordain one Numidicus*, § *a confessor*, ‖ *who had been left for dead, half burnt and buried in stones*. True, but what *questionable point of doctrine* or discipline did he introduce hereby? Or by ordaining *Celerinus: who was over-ruled and compelled by a divine vision to accept that office*. So you affirm *Cyprian* says. But *Cyprian* says it not; at least, not in those words which you cite in the margin; which literally translated, run thus, *I recommend to you Celerinus, joined to our clergy*, ¶ *not by human sufferage, but by the divine favour*.

In another letter, speaking of Aurelius, whom he had ordained a reader, he says to his clergy and people, " *In ordaining clergy, my dearest brethren, I use to consult you first—But there is no need to*

 wait

‡ Utar ea admonitione, qua me DOMINUS uti jubet. Epist. 9.

§ p. 103. ‖ p. 104.

¶ Non humana suffragatione, sed divina dignatione, conjunctum. Epist. 34.

wait for human teſtimonies, when the divine ſuffer-age has been already ſignified.

An impartial man would wonder what you could infer from theſe five paſſages put together. Why, by the help of a ſhort poſtulatum, "He was fond of power," (you have as much ground to ſay, "He was fond of bloodſhed;") you will make it plain, "This was all a trick to enlarge his epiſcopal authority." But as that poſtulatum is not allowed, you have all your work to begin again.

7. Hitherto then the character of *Cyprian* is unhurt; but now you are reſolved to blow it up at once. So you proceed, † *The moſt memorable effect of any of his viſions, was his flight from his church in the time of perſecution.* ‡ *He affirms, that he was commanded to retire by a ſpecial revelation from heaven. Yet this plea was a mere fiction, contrived to quiet the ſcandal which was raiſed by his flight: and is confuted by himſelf, where he declares, it was the advice of Tertullus which prevailed with him to withdraw.*

You here charge *Cyprian* with *confuting himſelf*, in ſaying, He *withdrew by the advice of Tertullus*; whereas he *before affirmed, that he was commanded to retire by a ſpecial revelation from heaven.* Indeed he had not: there is no neceſſity at all for putting this conſtruction upon thoſe words, *The* Lord *who commanded me to retire*; which may without any force be underſtood of the

† p. 104. ‡ p. 105.

the written command, † *When they perſecute you in this city, flee ye into another.* It is not therefore clear, that this plea of *ſpecial revelation* was ever advanced. And if it was advanced, it ſtill remains to be proved, that *it was nothing elſe but a mere fiction.*

8. Your citing his editor here, obliges me to add a remark, for which you give continual occaſion. If either *Rigalt*, Mr. *Dodwell*, Dr. *Grabe*, Mr. *Thirlby*, or any editor of any of the fathers, ever drops an expreſſion to the diſadvantage of the author whom he publiſhes or illuſtrates, this you account ſo much treaſure, and will ſurely find a time to expoſe it to public view. And all theſe paſſages you recite as demonſtration. Theſe are doubtleſs mere oracles: although when the ſame perſon ſpeaks in favour of the father, his authority is not worth a ſtraw. But you have ‡ *none of thoſe arts which are commonly employed by diſputants to palliate a bad cauſe!*

9. What you relate of *Dionyſius*, biſhop of *Alexandria*, you have not from himſelf, but only from one who lived near an hundred years after *Dionyſius* was dead. Therefore he is not at all accountable for it: as neither am I for any viſion of St. *Jerom.* But I am concerned in the conſequence you draw from it: "If this was a fiction, ſo were *Cyprian*'s too." That will not follow. Many objections may lie againſt the one, which have no place with regard to the other.

 10. You

† Matt. x. 23. ‡ Pref. p. 31.

10. You now bring forth your grand diſcovery, that † *all the viſions* of thoſe days *were contrived, or authorized at leaſt, by the leading men of the church. For they were all applied, either,* 1. *To excuſe the conduct of particular perſons, in ſome inſtances of it liable to cenſure, or,* 2. *To enforce ſome doctrine or diſcipline preſſed by ſome, but not reliſhed by others, or,* 3. *To confirm things not only frivolous, but ſometimes even ſuperſtitious and hurtful.*

Well, Sir, here is the propoſition. But where is the proof? I hope we ſhall have it in your next *Free Inquiry:* and that you will then give us a few inſtances of ſuch applications, from the writers of the three firſt centuries.

11. Being not diſpoſed to do this at preſent, you fall again upon the poor *heretic Montanus: who* ‡ *firſt gave a vogue* (as you phraſe it) *to viſions and extaſies in the Chriſtian church.* So you told us before. But we cannot believe it yet; becauſe *Peter* and *Paul* tell us the contrary.

Indeed you do not now mention *Montanus*, becauſe it is any thing to the queſtion, but only to make way for *obſerving*, that thoſe who wrote againſt him, *employed ſuch arguments againſt his prophecy, as ſhake the credit of all prophecy. For* Epiphanius *makes this the very criterion between a true and a falſe prophet,* " *That the true had no extaſies, conſtantly retained his ſenſes, and with firmneſs of mind apprehended and uttered the divine oracles.*"

† p. 109. ‡ p. 110.

oracles." Sir, have you not miſtook? Have you not tranſcribed one ſentence in the margin, and tranſlated another? That ſentence which ſtands in your margin is this, *When there was need, the ſaints of* God *among the prophets prophefied all things with the true ſpirit, and with a ſound underſtanding and reaſonable mind.* Now it is difficult to find out how this comes to *ſhake the credit of all prophecy.*

12. Why thus. † *Before the* Montaniſts *had brought thoſe extaſies into diſgrace, the prophecy of the orthodox too was exerted in extaſy. And ſo were the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, according to the current opinion of earlier days.*

That this was then the *current opinion*, you bring three citations to prove. But if you could cite three fathers more during the three firſt centuries, *expreſly affirming*, that the prophets were all out of their ſenſes, I would not take their word. For though I take moſt of the fathers to have been wiſe and good men, yet I know none of them were infallible. But do even theſe three affirm it? No: not one of them, at leaſt in the words you have cited. From *Athenagoras* you cite only part of a ſentence, which tranſlated as literally as it will well bear runs thus, *Who in an extaſy of their own thoughts, being moved by the divine Spirit, ſpoke the things with which they were inſpired, even as a piper breathes into a pipe.* Does *Athenagoras expreſly affirm* in theſe words,

† p. 111.

that the prophets were *tranſported out of their ſenſes?* I hope, Sir, you do not underſtand *Greek.* If ſo, you ſhew here only a little harmleſs ignorance.

13. From *Juſtin Martyr* alſo you cite but part of a ſentence. He ſpeaks (very nearly) thus:

That the Spirit of God *deſcending from heaven, and uſing righteous men, as the quill ſtrikes the harp or lyre, may reveal unto us the knowledge of divine and heavenly things.* And does *Juſtin expreſly affirm* in theſe words, that all the prophets were *tranſported out of their ſenſes?*

Tertullian's words are, *A man being in the ſpirit, eſpecially when he beholds the glory of* God, † *muſt needs loſe ſenſe.* Now as it is not plain, that he means hereby loſe his underſtanding, (it being at leaſt equally probable, that he intends no more than loſing for the time the uſe of his outward ſenſes) neither can it be ſaid, that *Tertullian* expreſly affirms, *The prophets were all out of their ſenſes.* Therefore you have not ſo much as one father to vouch for what you ſay was *the current opinion in thoſe days.*

14. I doubt not but all men of learning will obſerve a circumſtance, which holds throughout all your quotations. The ſtrength of your argument conſtantly lies in a looſe and paraphraſtical manner of tranſlating. The ſtrength of mine lies in tranſlating all in the moſt cloſe and literal manner; ſo that cloſeneſs of tranſlation ſtrengthens

† Neceſſe eſt, excidat ſenſu.

ens mine in the same proportion as it weakens your arguments: a plain proof of what you elsewhere observe, that you use *no* † *subtle refinements or forced constructions.*

15. But to return to *Cyprian.* I ‡ *cannot forbear*, you say, *relating two or three more of his wonderful stories. The first is,* § *A man who had denied* Christ, *was presently struck dumb: the second, A woman who had done so, was seized by an unclean spirit, and soon after died in great anguish: the third, of which he says he was an eye-witness, is this: the Heathen magistrates gave to a Christian infant, part of what had been offered to an idol. When the deacon forced the consecrated wine on this child, it was immediately seized with convulsions and vomiting: as was a woman who had apostatized, upon taking the consecrated elements.* The other two relations *Cyprian* does not affirm of his own personal knowledge.

‖ *Now what can we* think, say you, *of these strange stories, but that they were partly forged, partly dress up in this tragical form, to support the discipline of the church, in these times of danger and trial?*

Why, many will think, that some of them are true, even in the manner they are related: and that if any of them are not, *Cyprian* thought they were, and related them in the sincerity of his heart. Nay, perhaps some will think, that the wisdom of God might, *in those times of danger*

† Preface, p. 31. ‡ p. 112. § p. 113. ‖ p 115.

and trial, work things of this kind, for that very end, *to support the discipline of the church*. And till you shew the falshood, or at least the improbability of this, *Cyprian*'s character stands untainted: not only as a man of sense (which you yourself allow) but likewise of eminent integrity: and consequently, it is beyond dispute, that *visions*, the fifth miraculous gift, remained in the church after the days of the apostles.

Sect. V. 1. The sixth of the miraculous gifts which you enumerated above, namely, *the discernment of spirits*, you just name, and then intirely pass over. ¶ The seventh is, that of *expounding the scriptures*. You tack to it, *or the mysteries of* God. But inasmuch as it is not yet agreed (as it was intimated above) whether this be the same gift, it may just as well be left out.

2. Now as to this, you say, *There is no trace of it to be found, since the days of the apostles. For even in the second and third centuries, a most senseless and extravagant method of expounding them prevailed. For which when we censure any particular father, his apologists with one voice alledge, "This is to be charged to the age wherein he lived, which could not relish or endure any better."*

I doubt much, whether you can produce one single apologist for any *ridiculous comment on sacred writ*, who any where *alledges, that the second or third century could not relish or endure any better.*

¶ p. 116.

better. But if they were all to say this with one voice, yet no reasonable man could believe them; For it is notoriously contrary to matter of fact. It may be allowed, that some of these fathers, being afraid of too literal a way of expounding the scriptures, leaned sometimes to the other extreme. Yet nothing can be more unjust than to infer from hence, *That the age in which they lived, could not relish or endure any but senseless, extravagant enthusiastic, ridiculous comments on sacred writ.*

Will you say, that all the comments on scripture, still to be found, in the writings of *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Athenagoras*, or even of *Origen* and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, are senseless and extravagant? If not, this charge must fall to the ground: it being manifest, that even *the age in which they lived*, could both *endure and relish*, sound, sensible, rational (and yet spiritual) comments on holy writ.

Yet this extravagant charge you have repeated over and over in various parts of your work: thrusting it upon your reader in season and out of season. How fairly, let all candid men judge.

3. Touching the miraculous gifts of expounding scripture you say, *Justin Martyr* † *affirms, it was conferred on him by the special grace of* God. I cannot find, where he affirms this. Not in the words you cite, which literally translated (as was observed

† p. 117.

obſerved before) run thus: *He hath revealed to us whatſoever things we have underſtood by his grace from the ſcriptures alſo.* You ſeem conſcious, theſe words do not prove the point, and therefore eke them out with thoſe of Monſieur *Tillemont*. But his own words, and no other will ſatisfy me. I cannot believe it, unleſs from his own mouth.

4. Meantime I cannot but obſerve an odd circumſtance, that you are here, in the abundance of your ſtrength, confuting a propoſition which (whether it be true or falſe) not one of your antagoniſts affirms. You are labourning to prove, "There was not in the primitive church any ſuch miraculous gift as that of expounding the ſcriptures." Pray, Sir, who ſays, there was? Not *Juſtin Martyr:* not one among all thoſe fathers, whom you have quoted as witneſſes of the miraculous gifts, from the tenth to the eighteenth page of your inquiry. If you think they do, I am ready to follow you, ſtep by ſtep, through every quotaion you have made.

5. No, nor is this mentioned in any enumeration of the miraculous gifts, which I can find in the holy ſcriptures. Prophecy indeed is mentioned more than once, by the apoſtles, as well as the fathers. But the context ſhews, where it is promiſed as a miraculous gift, it means the foretelling things to come. All therefore which you ſay on this head, is a mere *ignoratio elenchi*, a miſtake of the queſtion to be proved.

Sect.

Sect. VI. 1. † The eighth and laſt of the miraculous gifts you enumerated, was, the gift of tongues. And this, 'tis ſure, was claimed by the primitive Chriſtians; for *Irenæus* ſays expreſly, *We hear many in the church, ſpeaking with all kinds of tongues. And yet*, you ſay, *this was granted only on certain ſpecial occaſions, and then withdrawn again from the apoſtles themſelves: ſo that in the ordinary courſe of their miniſtry they were generally deſtitute of it. This*, you ſay *I have ſhewn elſewhere.* I preſume, in ſome treatiſe which I have not ſeen.

2. But *Irenæus*, who declares, that *many had this gift in his days, yet owns, he had it not himſelf.* This is only a proof that the caſe was then the ſame, as when St. *Paul* obſerved long before, ‡ *Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all ſpeak with tongues?* No not even when thoſe gifts were ſhed abroad in the moſt abundant manner.

3. § *But no other father has made the leaſt claim to it.* Perhaps none of thoſe whoſe writings are now extant; at leaſt, not in thoſe writings which are extant. But what are theſe in compariſon of thoſe which are loſt? And how many were burning and ſhining lights, within three hundred years after *Chriſt*, who wrote no account of themſelves at all; at leaſt none which has come to our hands? But who are they that ‖ *ſpeak of it as a gift peculiar to the time of the apoſtles?*

† p. 119. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 29, 30. § p. 120. ‖ ibid.

apoſtles? You ſay, *There is not a ſingle father who ventures to ſpeak of it in any other manner.* Well, bring but ſix *Antenicene* fathers, who ſpeak of it in this manner, and I will give up the whole point.

† 4. But you ſay, *After the apoſtolic times, there is not in all hiſtory one inſtance, even ſo much as mentioned, of any particular perſon who ever exerciſed this gift.* You muſt mean, either that the Heathens have mentioned no inſtance of this kind, (which is not at all ſurprizing) or that *Irenæus* does not mention the names of thoſe many perſons who in this time exerciſed this gift. And this alſo may be allowed without affecting in any wiſe the credibility of his teſtimony concerning them.

5. I muſt take notice here of another of your poſtulatums, which leads you into many miſtakes. With regard to paſt ages, you continually take this for granted, *What is not recorded was not done.* But this is by no means a ſelf-evident axiom. Nay, poſſibly it is not true. For there may be many reaſons in the depth of the wiſdom of God, for his doing many things at various times and places, either by his natural or ſupernatural power, which were never recorded at all. And abundantly more were recorded once, and that with the fulleſt evidence, whereof nevertheleſs we find no certain evidence now, at the diſtance of fourteen hundred years.

6. Perhaps

† p. 120.

6. Perhaps this may obtain in the very caſe before us. Many may have ſpoken with new tongues, of whom this is not recorded: at leaſt the records are loſt, in a courſe of ſo many hundred years. Nay, it is not only poſſible that it may be ſo, but it is abſolutely certain that it is ſo. And you yourſelf muſt acknowledge it. For *you* acknowledge, that the apoſtles, when in ſtrange countries, ſpoke with ſtrange tongues: that St. *John*, for inſtance. when in *Aſia Minor*, St. *Peter*, when in *Italy* (if he was really there) and the other apoſtles, when in other countries, in *Parthia*, *Media*, *Phrygia*, *Pamphylia*, ſpoke each to the natives of each in their own tongues, the wonderful works of God. And yet there is no authentic record of this: *There is not in all hiſtory, one well-atteſted inſtance of any particular apoſtle's exerciſing this gift in any country whatſoever.* Now, Sir, if your axiom were allowed, what would be the conſequence? Even that the apoſtles themſelves no more ſpoke with tongues than any of their ſucceſſors.

7. I need therefore take no trouble about your ſubſequent reaſonings, ſeeing they are built on ſuch a foundation. Only I muſt obſerve an hiſtorical miſtake which occurs toward the bottom of your next page. Since the reformation, you ſay, † *this gift has never once been heard of, or pretended to by the* Romaniſts *themſelves.* But has it been *pretended to* (whether juſtly or not) by no others,

† p. 122.

others, though not by the *Romaniſts?* Has it *never once been heard of* ſince that time? Sir, your memory fails you again. It has undoubtedly been *pretended to*, and that at no great diſtance either from our time or country. It has been *heard of* more than *once*, no farther off than the valleys of *Dauphiny*. Nor is it yet fifty years ago, ſince the *Proteſtant* inhabitants of thoſe valleys ſo loudly *pretended* to this and other miraculous powers, as to give much diſturbance to *Paris* itſelf. And how did the king of *France* confute that pretence, and prevent its being heard any more? Not by the pen of his ſcholars, but by (a truly Heathen way) the ſwords and bayonets of his dragoons.

8. You cloſe this head with a very extraordinary thought. ‡ *The gift of tongues may*, you ſay, *be conſidered, as a proper teſt or criterion for determining the miraculous pretenſions of all churches. If among their extraordinary gifts they cannot ſhew us this, they have none to ſhew which are genuine.*

Now I really thought, it had been otherwiſe. I thought it had been an adjudged rule in the caſe, *All theſe worketh one and the ſelf-ſame ſpirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.* And as to every man, ſo to every church, every collective body of men. But if this be ſo, then yours is no proper teſt, for determining the pretenſions of all churches: ſeeing he who worketh as he will, may (with *your* good leave) give the gift of tongues, where he gives no other: and may ſee abundant

‡ p. 122.

abundant reaſons ſo to do, whether you and I ſee them or not. For perhaps we have not always *known the mind of the* Lord; not being of the number of his counſellors On the other hand, he may ſee good to give many other gifts, where it is not his will to beſtow this. Particularly where it would be of no uſe: as in a church where all are of one mind, and all ſpeak the ſame language.

9. You have now finiſhed (after a faſhion) what you propoſed to do in the fourth place, which was, *To review all the ſeveral kinds of miraculous gifts, which are pretended to have been in the primitive church.* Indeed, you have dropped one or two of them by the way; againſt the reſt you have brought forth your ſtrong reaſons. Thoſe reaſons have been coolly examined. And now let every impartial man, every perſon of true and unbiaſſed reaſon, calmly conſider and judge, whether you have made out one point of all that you took in hand? And whether ſome miracles of each kind may not have been wrought in the antient church, for any thing you have advanced to the contrary?

10. From the 127th to the 158th page, you relate miracles ſaid to be wrought in the fourth century. I have no concern with theſe; but I muſt weigh an argument which you intermix therewith again and again. It is in ſubſtance this; "If we cannot believe the miracles atteſted by the later fathers, then we ought not to believe thoſe which are atteſted by the earlieſt writers of the

the church." I anſwer the conſequence is not good; becauſe the caſe is not the ſame with the one and with the other. Several objections, which do not hold with regard to the earlier, may lie againſt the later miracles; † drawn either from the improbability of the facts themſelves, ſuch as we have no precedent of in holy writ; from the incompetency of the inſtruments ſaid to perform them, ſuch as bones, reliques, or departed ſaints; or from the groſs *credulity of a prejudiced, or the diſhoneſty of an intereſted relator.*

11. One of theſe objections holds againſt moſt of the later (though not the earlier) miracles. And if only one holds, it is enough; it is ground ſufficient for making the difference. If therefore it was true, that there was ‡ not a ſingle father of the fourth age, who was not eqully pious with the beſt of the more antient, ſtill we might conſiſtently reject moſt of the miracles of the fourth, while we allowed thoſe of the preceding ages; both becauſe of the far greater improbability of the facts themſelves, and becauſe of the incompetency of the inſtruments.

But it is not true, that *the fathers of the fourth age, whom you mention*, were equally pious with the beſt of the preceding ages. Nay, according to your account, (which I ſhall not now conteſt) they were not pious at all. For you ſay, "They were wilful, habitual liars." And if ſo, they had not a grain of piety. Now that the earlier fathers

† p. 145. ‡ p. 159.

fathers were not such, has been shewn at large (though indeed you complimented them with the same character.) Consequently, whether these later fathers are to be believed or no, we may safely believe the former: who dared not to do evil that good might come, or to lie either for God or man.

12. I had not intended to say any thing more, concerning any of the miracles of the later ages. But your way of accounting for one, said to have been wrought in the fifth, is so extremely curious that I cannot pass it by.

The story, it seems, is this: ‡ *Hunneric*, an *Arian* prince, in his persecution of the orthodox in Afric, ordered the tongues of a certain society of them to be cut out by the roots. But by a surprising instance of God's good providence, they were enabled to speak articulately and distinctly, without their tongues. And so continuing to make open profession of the same doctrine, they became not only preachers, but living witnesses of its truth."

Do not mistake me, Sir. I have no design at all to vouch for the truth of this miracle. I leave it just as I find it. But what I am concerned with is, your manner of accounting for it.

13. And first, you say, § *It may not improbably be supposed, that though their tongues were ordered to be cut to the roots, yet the sentence might not be so strictly executed, as not to leave in some of them such*

‡ p. 182. § p. 183.

such a share of that organ as was sufficient, in a tolerable degree, for the use of speech.

So you think, Sir, if only an inch of a man's tongue were to be neatly taken off, he would be able to talk tolerably well, as soon as the operation was over.

But the most marvellous part is still behind. For you add, ‡ *To come more close to the point. If we should allow that the tongues of these confessors were cut away to the very roots, what will the learned doctor say, if this boasted miracle should be found at last to be no miracle at all?*

Say? Why, that you have more skill than all the *strolling wonder-workers* of the three first centuries put together.

But to the point, Let us see how you will set about it. Why thus: *The* § *tongue* (as you justly, tho' keenly observe) *has generally been considered as absolutely necessary to the use of speech. So that to hear men talk without it, might easily pass for a miracle in that credulous age. Yet there was always room to doubt, whether there was any thing miraculous in it or not. But we have an instance in the present century, which clears up all our doubts, and entirely decides the question. I mean, the case of a girl born without a tongue, who talked as easily and distinctly as if she had had one; an account of which is given in the memoirs of the academy of sciences at* Paris.

14. And

‡ p. 184. § ibid.

14. And can you really believe this? That a girl *ſpoke diſtinctly and eaſily* without any tongue at all? And after avowing this belief, do you gravely talk of other mens credulity? I wonder that ſuch a volunteer in faith ſhould ſtagger at any thing. Doubtleſs, were it related as natural only, not miraculous, you could believe, that a man might ſee without eyes.

* Surely there is ſomething very peculiar in this; ſomething extraordinary, though not miraculous; that a man, who is too wiſe to believe the bible, ſhould believe every thing but the bible! Should ſwallow any tale, ſo God be out of the queſtion, though ever ſo improbable, ever ſo impoſſible.

15. † *I have now*, you ſay, *thrown together all which I had collected for the ſupport of my argument:* a ‡ lame recapitulation of which you add with an air of triumph and ſatisfaction, § *I wiſh the fathers, the ableſt advocates which popery itſelf can afford: for* proteſtantiſm, *I am ſure, can ſupply none whom they would chuſe to retain in their cauſe: none who can defend them without contradicting their own profeſſion, and diſgracing their own character; or produce any thing, but what deſerves to be laughed at, rather than anſwered.*

Might it not be well, Sir, not to be quite ſo *ſure* yet? You may not always have the laugh on your ſide. You are not yet infallibly aſſured, but that even *proteſtantiſm* may *produce* ſomething

† p. 187. ‡ p. 188. § p. 189.

thing worth an anſwer. There may be ſome *proteſtants*, for aught you know, who have a few grains of common ſenſe left, and may find a way to *defend*, at leaſt the *Antenicene fathers*, without *diſgracing their own character*. Even ſuch an one as I have faintly attempted this: although I neither have, nor expect to have any preferment; not even to be a *Lambeth chaplain*:—which if Dr. *Middleton* is not, it is not his own fault.

V. 1. The laſt thing you propoſed was, *To refute ſome of the moſt plauſible objections which have been hitherto made.* To what you have offered on this head, I muſt likewiſe attempt a ſhort reply.

You ſay, † *It is objected, firſt, That by the character I have given of the fathers, the authority of the books of the New Teſtament, which were tranſmitted to us through their hands, will be rendered precarious and uncertain.*

After a feint of confuting it, you frankly acknowledge the whole of this objection. ‡ *I may venture*, you ſay, *to declare, that if this objection be true, it cannot hurt my argument. For if it be natural and neceſſary, that the craft and credulity of witneſſes ſhould always detract from the credit of their teſtimony; then who can help it? And if this charge be proved on the fathers, it muſt be admitted, how far ſoever the conſequences may reach.*

" If

† p. 190. ‡ p. 192.

"If it be proved"—Very true. If that charge againſt the fathers were really and ſubſtantially proved, the authority of the New Teſtament would be at an end, ſo far as it depends on one kind of evidence. But that charge is not proved. Therefore even the traditional authority of the New Teſtament is as firm as ever.

2. It is objected, you ſay, ſecondly, § "*That all ſuſpicion of fraud in the caſe of the primitive miracles, is excluded by that public appeal and challenge which the Chriſtian apologiſts make to their enemies the Heathens, to come and ſee with their own eyes the reality of the facts which they atteſt.*"

You anſwer, *This objection has no real weight with any who are acquainted with the condition of the Chriſtians in thoſe days.* You then inlarge ‖ (as it ſeems, with a peculiar pleaſure) on the general contempt and odium they lay under, from the firſt appearance of Chriſtianity in the world, till it was eſtabliſhed by the civil power.

¶ *In theſe circumſtances it cannot be imagined*, you ſay, *that men of figure and fortune would pay any attention to the apologies or writings of a ſect ſo utterly deſpiſed.* But, Sir, they were hated as well as deſpiſed; and that by the great vulgar as well as the ſmall. And this very hatred would naturally prompt them to examine the ground of the challenges daily repeated by them they hated: were it only, that by diſcovering the fraud (which they wanted neither opportunity nor ſkill

§ p. 193. ‖ p. 194, 195, 196. ¶ p. 197.

to do, had there been any) they might have had a better pretence for throwing *the Chriſtians to the lions*, than becauſe the *Nile* did not, or the *Tiber* did overflow.

3. You add, † *Much leſs can we believe that the emperor or ſenate of* Rome *ſhould take any notice of thoſe apologies, or even know indeed that any ſuch were addreſſed to them.*

Why, Sir, by *your* account you would make us believe, that all the emperors and ſenate together were as *ſenſeleſs, ſtupid a race of blockheads and brutes*, as even the Chriſtians themſelves.

But hold. You are going to prove it too. *For*, ſay you, *ſhould the like caſe happen now, that any Methodiſt, Moravian, or French prophet*, (right ſkilfully put together) *ſhould publiſh an apology for his brethren, addreſt to the king and parliament; is it not wholly improbable, that the government would pay any regard to it?* You ſhould add (to make the parallel compleat) *or know that any ſuch was addreſſed to them.*

No. I conceive the improbability ſuppoſed lies wholly on the other ſide. Whatever the government of Heathen *Rome* was, (which I preſume *you* will not depretiate) the government of *England* is remarkable for tenderneſs to the very meaneſt ſubject. It is therefore not improbable in the leaſt, that an addreſs from ſome thouſands of thoſe ſubjects, how contemptible ſoever they were generally eſteemed, would not be totally diſregarded

† p. 197.

disregarded by such a government. But that they should *not know that any such had been addressed to them*, is not only improbable, but morally impossible.

If therefore it were possible for the Heathens to *have a worse opinion of the antient Christians than we*, you say, *have of our modern fanatics*, still it is utterly incredible, that the *Roman* government should not only *take no notice of their apologies*, but not even know that any such were addrest to them.

4. † "But the publishing books was more expensive then than it is now. And therefore we cannot think the Christians of those days were ‡ able *to provide such a number of them as was sufficient for the information of the public.*

Nay, if they were not able to provide themselves food and raiment, they would be sure to provide a sufficient number of these: sufficient at least for the information of the emperor and senate, to whom those apologies were addrest. And how great a number, do you suppose, might suffice for them? How many hundred or thousand copies? I apprehend the emperor would be content with one. And one more would be needful for the senate. Now I really believe the Christians of those days were able to provide both these copies. Nay, and even two more; if it should have fallen out, that two or three emperors were on the throne: even

† p. 198. ‡ p. 199.

though we ſhould ſuppoſe, that in *Tertullian*'s time there were but forty thouſand of them in all *Rome*.

5. However, you plunge on: † *Since then the Chriſtians were not able to bear the expence of copying them* (whether *the Heathens* were *diſpoſed to buy them* or no, is at preſent out of the queſtion) *there is great reaſon to believe, that their apologies, how gravely ſoever addreſſed to emperors and ſenates, lay unknown for many years.* There is no great reaſon to believe it from any thing you have advanced yet. You add, *eſpecially when the publiſhing of them was not only expenſive, but ſo criminal alſo, as to expoſe them often to danger, and even to capital puniſhment.*

In very deed, Sir, I am ſometimes inclined to ſuſpect, that you are yourſelf related to certain antient fathers, (notwithſtanding the learned quotations which adorn your margin) who uſed to ſay, *Græcum eſt: non poteſt legi.* You lay me under an almoſt invincible temptation to think ſo upon this very occaſion. For what could induce you, if you knew what he ſaid, to place at the bottom of this very page, a paſſage from one of thoſe apologiſts, *Juſtin Martyr*, which ſo clearly confutes your own argument? The words are, ‡ *Although*

† p. 199.

‡ Καίπερ θανάτου ὁρισθέντος κατὰ τῶν διδασκόντων, ἢ ὅλως ὁμολογούντων τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡμεῖς πανταχοῦ καὶ ἀσπαζόμεθα καὶ διδάσκομεν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ὑμεῖς ὡς ἐχθροὶ ἐντεύξεσθε τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις, οὐ πλέον τι δύνασθε τοῦ φονεύειν.

Juſt. Mart. Apol. i. p. 69.

though death be determined againſt thoſe who teach, or even confeſs the name of Chriſt, *we both embrace and teach it every where. And if you alſo receive theſe words as enemies, you can do no more than kill us.* Could *danger* then, or the fear of *capital puniſhment* reſtrain thoſe Chriſtians from preſenting theſe apologies? No; capital puniſhment was no terror to them, who daily offered themſelves to the flames: till the very Heathen butchers themſelves were tired with ſlaughtering them.

There can therefore no ſhadow of doubt remain, with any cool and impartial man, but that theſe apologies were preſented to the moſt eminent Heathens, to the magiſtrates, the ſenate, the emperors. Nor conſequently is there the leaſt room to doubt of the truth of the facts therein aſſerted: ſeeing the apologiſts conſtantly defied their enemies, *to come and ſee them with their own eyes:* a hazard which thoſe *crafty men* would never have run, had not the facts themſelves been infallibly certain. This objection then ſtands againſt you in full force. For ſuch a public appeal to their bitterеſt enemies muſt *exclude all reaſonable ſuſpicion of fraud, in the caſe of the primitive miracles.*

6. You tell us, it is objected, thirdly, ‡ *That no ſuſpicion of fraud can reaſonably be entertained againſt thoſe who expoſed themſelves even to mar-*

‡ p. 199.

tyrdom, in confirmation of the truth of what they taught.

In order to invalidate this objection, you aſſert, " ‡ That ſome of the primitive Chriſtians might expoſe themſelves to martyrdom, out of mere obſtinacy; others, § from a deſire of glory; others, ‖ from a fear of reproach; but the moſt of all, ¶ from the hope of a higher reward in heaven; eſpecially, as they believed, † the end of the world was near, and ‡‡ that the martyrs felt no pain in death." *All* §§ *which topics*, you ſay, *when diſplayed with art, were ſufficient to inflame the multitude* to embrace *any martyrdom.*

This appears very plauſible in ſpeculation. But fact and experience will not anſwer. You are an eloquent man, and are able to diſplay any topic you pleaſe, with art enough. Yet if you was to try, with all that art and eloquence, to perſuade by all theſe topics, not a whole multitude, but one ſimple credulous ploughman, to go and be ſhot through the head; I am afraid, you would ſcarce prevail with him after all, to embrace even that eaſy martyrdom. And it might be more difficult ſtill to find a man, who either out of obſtinacy, fear of ſhame, or deſire of glory, would calmly and deliberately offer himſelf to be roaſted alive in *Smithfield.*

7. Have you conſidered, Sir, how the caſe ſtood in our own country, ſcarce two hundred years

‡ p. 200. § p. 201. ‖ p. 208. ¶ p. 202. † p. 203. ‡‡ p. 204. §§ p. 208.

years ago? Not a multitude indeed, and yet not a few, of our own countrymen then expired in the flames. And it was not a general perfuafion among them, that martyrs feel no pain in death. That thefe have feeling, as well as other men, plainly appeared, in the cafe of bifhop *Ridley*, crying out, " I cannot burn, I cannot burn," when his lower parts were confumed. Do you think the fear of fhame, or the defire of praife, was the motive on which thefe acted? Or have you reafon to believe it was mere obftinacy that hindered them from accepting deliverance? Sir, *fince human nature has always been the fame, fo that our experience of what* now *paffes* in our own foul, *will be the beft comment on what is delivered to us concerning* others, let me intreat you, to make the cafe your own. You muft not fay, " I am not one of the ignorant vulgar: I am a man of fenfe and learning." So were many of them; not inferior even to you, either in natural or acquired endowments. I afk then, would any of thefe motives fuffice to induce you to burn at a ftake? I befeech you, lay your hand on your heart, and anfwer between God and your own foul, what motive could incite you to walk into a fire, but an hope full of immortality? When you mention this motive, you fpeak to the point. And yet even with regard to this, both you and I fhould find, did it come to a trial, that the hope of a fool, or the hope of an hypocrite, would ftand us in no ftead.

We ſhould find nothing elſe would ſuſtain us in that hour, but a well-grounded confidence of a better reſurrection: nothing leſs than the "ſted-faſtly looking up to heaven, and beholding the glory which ſhall be revealed."

8. "But Heretics, you ſay, have been martyrs." I will anſwer more particularly, when you ſpecify who? and when? It may ſuffice to ſay now, whoſoever he be, that rather than he will offend God, calmly and deliberately chuſes to ſuffer death, I cannot lightly ſpeak evil of him.

But *Cyprian* ſays, "Some who had ſuffered tortues for *Chriſt*, yet afterwards fell into groſs, open ſin." It may be ſo; but it is nothing to the queſtion. It does not prove in the leaſt, what you brought it to prove, namely, "That bad men have endured martyrdom.' Don't evade, Sir, and ſay, "Yes, torments are a kind of of martydom." True; but not the martyrdom of which we ſpeak.

9. You ſalve all at laſt, by declaring gravely, † *It is not my deſign to detract in any manner from the juſt praiſe of thoſe primitive martyrs, who ſuſtained the cauſe of* Chriſt *at the expence of their lives.* No. Who could ever ſuppoſe it was? Who could imagine, it was your deſign to detract from the *juſt praiſe of Juſtin, Irenæus,* or *Cyprian?* You only deſired to ſhew, what their juſt praiſe was, namely, the praiſe of pick-pockets, of common cheats and impoſtors. We underſtand

‡ p. 112.

underſtand your meaning therefore, when you add, ‡ *It is reaſonable to believe, that they were the beſt ſort of Chriſtians, and the chief ornaments of the church in their ſeveral ages.*

10. You conclude, *My view is to ſhew, that their martyrdom does not add any weight to their teſtimony.* Whether it does or no, § *It gives the ſtrongeſt proof* (as you yourſelf affirm) *of the ſincerity of their faith:* and conſequently proves, *That no ſuſpicion of fraud can reaſonably be entertained againſt them.* But this (which you ſeem to have quite forgot) was the whole of the objection: and conſequently this as well as both the former objections, remain in their full force.

11. It has been objected, fourthly, you ſay, That ‖ you *deſtroy the faith and credit of all hiſtory.* But this objection, you affirm, ¶ *when ſeriouſly conſidered, will appear to have no ſenſe at all in it.*

That we will try. And one paſſage, home to the point, is as good as a thouſand. Now, Sir, be pleaſed to look back. In your preface, page the ninth, I read theſe words: *The credibility of facts lies open to the trial of our reaſon and ſenſes. But the credibility of witneſſes depends on a variety of principles wholly concealed from us. And though, in many caſes, it may reaſonably be preſumed, yet in none can it certainly be known.*

If this be as you aſſert (I repeat it again) then farewel the credit of all hiſtory: Sir, this is not

‡ p. 113. § ibid. ‖ p. 114. ¶ p. 115.

the cant of zealots: you muſt not eſcape ſo: it is plain, ſober reaſon. If *the credibility of witneſſes* (of all witneſſes; for you make no diſtinction) depends, as you peremptorily affirm, on a variety of principles *wholly concealed from us*, and conſequently, though it may be preſumed im many caſes, yet can be certainly known in none: then it is plain, all hiſtory, ſacred or profane, is utterly precarious and uncertain. Then I may indeed preſume, but I cannot certainly know, that *Julius Cæſar* was killed in the ſenate-houſe: then I cannot certainly know, that there was an emperor in *Germany*, called *Charles* the fifth: that *Leo* the tenth ever ſat in the ſee of *Rome*, or *Lewis* the fourteenth on the throne of *France*. Now let any man of common underſtanding judge, whether this objection has any ſenſe in it, or no.

12. Under this ſame head, you fall again upon the caſe of witchcraft, and ſay, † *There is not in all hiſtory, any one miraculous fact, ſo authentically atteſted as the exiſtence of witches. All Chriſtian* (yea, and all Heathen) *nations whatſoever, have conſented in the belief of them. Now to deny the reality of facts ſo ſolemnly atteſted, and ſo univerſally believed, ſeems to give the lie to the ſenſe and experience of all Chriſtendom: to the wiſeſt and beſt of every nation, and to public monuments ſubſiſting to our own times.*

What obliges you then to deny it? Your anſwer, *The incredibility of the thing.* O Sir, never

† p. 221.

never ſtrain at the incredibility of this, after you have ſwallowed an hundred people talking without tongues.

13. What you aim at in this alſo is plain, as well as in your account of the *Abbe de Paris:* the point of your argument is, "If you cannot believe theſe, then you ought not to believe the bible: *The incredibility of the things* related ought to *over-rule all teſtimony whatſoever.*"

Your argument, at length, would run thus:

"If things be incredible in themſelves, then this incredibility ought to over-rule all teſtimony concerning them.

But the goſpel-miracles are incredible in themſelves." Sir, that propoſition I deny. You have not proved it yet. You have only now and then, as it were by the by, made an attempt to prove it. And till this is done, you have done nothing, with all the pother that you have made.

14. You reſerve the home ſtroke for the laſt. ‡ *There is hardly a miracle ſaid to he wrought in the primitive times, but what is ſaid to be performed in our days. But all theſe modern pretenſions, we aſcribe to their true cauſe, the craft of a few, playing upon the credulity of the many, for private intereſt. When therefore we read of the ſame things done by the antients, and for the ſame ends, of acquiring wealth, credit, or power: how can we poſſibly heſitate to impute them to the ſame cauſe of fraud and impoſture?*

‡ p. 230.

The reaſon of our heſitation is this. They did not anſwer *the ſame ends.* The modern clergy of *Rome* do acquire credit and wealth by their pretended miracles. But the antient clergy acquired nothing by their miracles, but to be *afflicted, deſtitute, tormented.* The one gain all things thereby; the others loſt all things. And this, we think, makes ſome difference. † *Even unto this preſent hour,* ſays one of them (writing to thoſe who could eaſily confute him, if he ſpoke not the truth) *we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place—Being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted, we ſuffer it; being defamed, we intreat. We are become as the filth of the world, as the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day.*—Now, Sir, whatever be thought of the others, we apprehend ſuch clergy as theſe, labouring *thus,* unto the death, for *ſuch* credit and wealth, are not chargeable with fraud and impoſture.

VI. I have now finiſhed what I had to ſay with regard to your book. Yet I think humanity requires me to add a few words concerning ſome points frequently touched upon therein, which perhaps you do not ſo clearly underſtand.

We have been long diſputing about *Chriſtians,* about *Chriſtianity,* and the *evidence* whereby it is ſupported. But what do theſe terms mean? Who is a Chriſtian indeed? What is real, genuine

† 1 Cor. iv.——13.

nuine Chriſtianity? And what is the fureſt and moſt acceſſible evidence (if I may ſo ſpeak) whereby I may know, that it is of God? May the God of the Chriſtians enable me to ſpeak on theſe heads, in a manner ſuitable to the importance of them!

Sect. I. 1. I would conſider, firſt, Who is a Chriſtian indeed? What does that term properly imply? It has been ſo long abuſed, I fear, not only to mean nothing at all, but, what was far worſe than nothing, to be a cloak for the vileſt hypocrify, for the groſſeſt abominations and immoralities of every kind, that it is high time to reſcue it out of the hands of wretches that are a reproach to human nature: to ſhew determinately, what manner of man he is, to whom this name of right belongs.

2. A Chriſtian cannot think of the author of his being, without abaſing himſelf before him: without a deep ſenſe of the diſtance between a worm of earth, and him that ſitteth on the circle of the heavens. In his preſence he ſinks into the duſt, knowing himſelf to be leſs than nothing in his eye: and being conſcious, in a manner words cannot expreſs, of his own littleneſs, ignorance, fooliſhneſs. So that he can only cry out, from the fulneſs of his heart, "O God! What is man! What am I!"

3. He has a continual ſenſe of his dependence on the parent of good, for his being, and all the

the bleſſings that attend it. To him he refers every natural, and every moral endowment: with all that is commonly aſcribed either to fortune, or to the wiſdom, courage or merit of the poſſeſſor. And hence he acquieſces in whatſoever appears to be his will, not only with patience, but with thankfulneſs. He willingly reſigns all he is, all he has, to his wiſe and gracious diſpoſal. The ruling temper of his heart, is the moſt abſolute ſubmiſſion, and the tendereſt gratitude to his ſovereign benefactor. And this grateful love creates filial fear: an awful reverence toward him, and an earneſt care not to give place to any diſpoſition, not to admit an action, word or thought, which might in any degree diſpleaſe that indulgent power to whom he owes his life, breath and all things.

4. And as he has the ſtrongeſt affection for the fountain of all good, ſo he has the firmeſt confidence in him: a confidence which neither pleaſure nor pain, neither life nor death can ſhake. But yet this, far from creating ſloth or indolence, puſhes him on to the moſt vigorous induſtry. It cauſes him to put forth all his ſtrength, in obeying him in whom he confides. So that he is never faint in his mind, never weary of doing whatever he believes to be his will. And as he knows, the moſt acceptable worſhip of God, is to imitate him he worſhips, ſo he is continually labouring to tranſcribe into himſelf all his imitable perfections; in particular, his juſtice, mercy and

and truth, ſo emimently diſplayed in all his creatures.

5. Above all, remembering that God is love, he is conformed to the ſame likeneſs. He is full of love to his neighbour: of univerſal love; not confined to one ſect or party; not reſtrained to thoſe who agree with him in opinions, in outward modes of worſhip; or to thoſe who are allied to him by blood, or recommended by nearneſs of place. Neither does he love thoſe only that love him or that are endeared to him by intimacy of acquaintance. But his love reſembles that of him, whoſe mercy is over all his works. It ſoars above all theſe ſcanty bounds, embracing neighbours and ſtrangers, friends and enemies: yea, not only the good and gentle, but alſo the froward; the evil and unthankful. For he loves every ſoul that God has made; every child of man, of whatever place or nation. And yet this univerſal benevolence does in no wiſe interfere with a peculiar regard for his relations, friends, and benefactors; a fervent love for his country; and the moſt endeared affection to all men of integrity, of clear and generous virtue.

* 6. His love to theſe, ſo to all mankind, is in itſelf generous and diſintereſted; ſpringing from no view of advantage to himſelf, from no regard to profit or praiſe: no, nor even the pleaſure of loving. This is the daughter, not the parent of his affection. By experience he knows, that

ſocial

ſocial love (if it mean the love of our neighbour) is abſolutely different from ſelf-love, even of the moſt allowable kind. Juſt as different as the objects at which they point. And yet it is ſure, that, if they are under due regulations, each will give additional force to the other, till they mix together never to be divided.

7. And this univerſal, diſintereſted love, is productive of all right affections. It is fruitful of gentleneſs, tenderneſs, ſweetneſs; of humanity, courteſy, and affability. It makes a Chriſtian rejoice in the virtues of all, and bear a part in their happineſs; at the ſame time that he ſympathizes with their pains, and compaſſionates their infirmities. It creates modeſty, condeſcenſion, prudence, together with calmneſs and evenneſs of temper. It is the parent of generoſity, openneſs, and frankneſs void of jealouſy and ſuſpicion. It begets candor, and willingneſs to believe and hope whatever is kind and friendly of every man; and invincible patience, never overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good.

8. The ſame love conſtrains him to converſe, not only with a ſtrict regard to truth, but with artleſs ſincerity and genuine ſimplicity, as one in whom there is no guile. And not content with abſtaining from all ſuch expreſſions as are contrary to juſtice or truth, he endeavours to refrain from every unloving word either to a preſent or of an abſent perſon: in all his converſation

tion aiming at this, either to improve himself in knowledge or virtue, or to make those with whom he converses some way wiser, or better, or happier than they were before.

9. The same love is productive of all right actions. It leads him into an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices, of whatever is due to relations of every kind; to his friends, to his country, and to any particular community whereof he is a member. It prevents his willingly hurting or grieving any man. It guides him into an uniform practice of justice and mercy, equally extensive with the principle whence it flows. It constrains him to do all possible good, of every possible kind, to all men: and makes him invariably resolved, in every circumstance of life, to do that, and that only, to others which supposing he were himself in the same situation, he would desire they should do to him.

10. And as he is easy to others so he is easy in himself. He is free from the painful swellings of pride, from the flames of anger, from the impetuous gusts of irregular self-will. He is no longer tortured with envy or malice, or with unreasonable and hurtful desire. He is no more enslaved to the pleasures of sense, but has the full power both over his mind and body, in a continued chearful course of sobriety, of temperance and chastity. He knows how to use all things in their place, and yet is superior to them all;

all. He ſtands above thoſe low pleaſures of imagination, which captivate vulgar minds, whether ariſing from what mortals term greatneſs, or novelty, or beauty. All theſe too he can taſte, and ſtill look upward; ſtill aſpire to nobler enjoyments. Neither is he a ſlave to fame: popular breath affects not him: he ſtands ſteady, and collected in himſelf.

11. And he who ſeeks no praiſe, cannot fear diſpraiſe. Cenſure gives him no uneaſineſs; being conſcious to himſelf, that he would not willingly offend, and that he has the approbation of the Lord of all. He cannot fear want, knowing in whoſe hand is the earth and the fulneſs thereof, and that it is impoſſible for him to withhold from one that fears him any manner of thing that is good. He cannot fear pain, knowing it will never be ſent, unleſs it be for his real advantage; and that then his ſtrength will be proportioned to it as it has always been in times paſt. He cannot fear death; being able to truſt him he loves with his ſoul as well as his body: yea, glad to leave the corruptible body in the duſt, till it is raiſed incorruptible and immortal. So that in honour or ſhame, in abundance or want, in eaſe or pain, in life or in death, always and in all things he has learned to be content, to be eaſy, thankful, happy.

* 12. He is happy in knowing there is a God, an intelligent cauſe and Lord of all, and that he is not the produce either of blind chance

or

or inexorable neceſſity. He is happy in the full aſſurance he has that this Creator and end of all things is a being of boundleſs wiſdom, of infinite power to execute all the deſigns of his wiſdom, and of no leſs infinite goodneſs, to direct all his power to the advantage of all his creatures. Nay, even the conſideration of his immutable juſtice, rendering to all their due, of his unſpotted holineſs, of his all-ſufficiency in himſelf, and of that immenſe ocean of all perfections, which center in God from eternity to eternity, is a continual addition to the happineſs of a Chriſtian.

13. A farther addition is made thereto, while, in contemplating even the things that ſurround him, that thought ſtrikes warmly upon his heart,

" *Theſe are thy glorious works, parent of good:*"

While he takes knowledge of the inviſible things of God, even his eternal power and wiſdom in the things that are ſeen, the heavens, the earth, the fowls of the air, the lillies of the field. How much more, while, rejoicing in the conſtant care which he ſtill takes of the work of his own hand, he breaks out, in a tranſport of love and praiſe, " O Lord, our governor! How excellent is thy name in all the earth! Thou that haſt ſet thy glory above the heavens!" While he, as it were, ſees the Lord ſitting upon his throne, and ruling all things well: while he obſerves the general providence of God co-extended with his whole

whole creation, and ſurveys all the effects of it in the heavens and earth, as a well-pleaſed ſpectator; while he ſees the wiſdom and goodneſs of his general government deſcending to every particular; ſo preſiding over the whole univerſe, as over a ſingle perſon, ſo watching over every ſingle perſon, as if he were the whole univerſe: how does he exult, when he reviews the various traces of the almighty goodneſs, in what has befallen himſelf in the ſeveral circumſtances and changes of his own life! All which, he now ſees, have been allotted to him, and dealt out in number, weight, and meaſure. With what triumph of ſoul, in ſurveying either the general or particular providence of God, does he obſerve every line pointing out an hereafter, every ſcene opening into eternity!

14. He is peculiarly and inexpreſſibly happy, in the cleareſt and fulleſt conviction, "This all-powerful, all-wiſe, all-gracious Being, this Governor of all, loves me. This lover of my ſoul is always with me, is never abſent, no not for a moment. And I love him; there is none in heaven but thee, none on earth that I deſire beſide thee! And he has given me to reſemble himſelf, he has ſtamped his image on my heart. And I live unto him; I do only his will; I glorify him with my body and my ſpirit. And it will not be long before I ſhall die unto him; I ſhall die

die into the arms of God. And then farewel ſin and pain; then it only remains, that I ſhould live with him for ever."

15. This is the plain, naked portraiture of a Chriſtian. But be not prejudiced againſt him for his name. Forgive his particularities of opinion, and (what you think) ſuperſtitious modes of worſhip. Theſe are circumſtances but of ſmall concern; and do not enter into the eſſence of his character. Cover them with a veil of love, and look at the ſubſtance; his tempers, his holineſs, his happineſs.

Can calm reaſon conceive either a more amiable or a more deſirable character?

Is it your own? Away with names! Away with opinions! I care not what you are called. I aſk not (it does not deſerve a thought) what opinion you are of; ſo you are conſcious to yourſelf, that you are the man, whom I have been (however faintly) deſcribing.

Do not you know, you ought to be ſuch? Is the Governor of the world well pleaſed that you are not?

Do you (at leaſt) deſire it? I would to God that deſire may penetrate your inmoſt ſoul; and that you may have no reſt in your ſpirit, till you are not only almoſt, but altogether a Chriſtian!

Sect. II. 1. The ſecond point to be conſidered is, What is real, genuine Chriſtianity? Whether

ther we ſpeak of it as a principle in the ſoul, or as a ſcheme or ſyſtem of doctrine.

Chriſtianity, taken in the latter ſenſe, is, that ſyſtem of doctrine, which deſcribes the character above recited, which promiſes, it ſhall be mine, (provided I will not reſt till I attain) and which tells me how I may attain it.

2. Firſt, It *deſcribes* this character in all its parts, and that in the moſt lively and affecting manner. The main lines of this picture are beautifully drawn in many paſſages of the Old Teſtament. Theſe are filled up in the New, retouched and finiſhed with all the art of God.

The ſame we have in miniature more than once; particularly in the thirteenth chapter of the former epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, and in that diſcourſe which St. *Matthew* records, as delivered by our Lord, at his entrance upon his public miniſtry.

3. Secondly, Chriſtianity *promiſes* this character ſhall be mine, if I will not reſt till I attain it. This is promiſed both in the Old Teſtament and New. Indeed the New is, in effect, all a promiſe; ſeeing every deſcription of the ſervants of God mentioned therein, has the nature of a command; in conſequence of thoſe general injunctions, † *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Chriſt:* ‡ *Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes.* And every command has the force of a promiſe, in virtue of thoſe general

† 1 Cor. xi. 1. ‡ Heb. vi. 12.

neral promiſes; § *A new heart will I give you, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgments and do them.* ‖ *This is the covenant that I will make after thoſe days, ſaith the* Lord, *I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts.* Accordingly, when it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt love the* Lord *thy* God, *with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind*; it is not only a direction what I ſhall do, but a promiſe of what God will do in me; exactly equivalent with what is written elſewhere, ¶ *The* Lord thy God *will circumciſe thy heart and the heart of thy ſeed* (alluding to the cuſtom then in uſe) *to love the* Lord *thy* God *with all thy heart and with all thy ſoul.*

4. This being obſerved, it will readily appear to every ſerious perſon, who reads the New Teſtament with care, which the importance of the ſubject demands, that every particular branch of the preceding character is manifeſtly promiſed therein; either explicitly, under the very form of a promiſe, or virtually, under that of deſcription or command.

5. Chriſtianity tells me, in the third place, how I may attain the promiſe, namely, by faith.

But what is faith? Not an opinion, no more than it is a form of words; not any number of opinions put together, be they ever ſo true. A ſtring

§ Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. ‖ Heb. viii. 10. ¶ Deut. xxx. 6.

ſtring of opinions is no more Chriſtian faith, than a ſtring of beads is Chriſtian holineſs.

It is not an aſſent to any opinion, or any number of opinions. A man may aſſent to three, or three and twenty creeds: he may aſſent to all the Old and New Teſtament (at leaſt, as far as he underſtands them) and yet have no Chriſtian faith at all.

* 6. The faith by which the promiſe is attained is repreſented by Chriſtianity, as a power wrought by the Almighty in an immortal ſpirit, inhabiting an houſe of clay, to ſee through that veil into the world of ſpirits, into things inviſible and eternal: a power to diſcern thoſe things which with eyes of fleſh and blood no man hath ſeen or can ſee; either by reaſon of their nature, which (though they ſurround us on every ſide) is not perceivable by theſe groſs ſenſes; or by reaſon of their diſtance, as being yet afar off in the boſom of eternity.

7. This is Chriſtian faith in the general notion of it. In its more particular notion it is, a divine evidence or conviction wrought in the heart, that God is reconciled to *me* through his Son: inſeparably joined with a confidence in him, as a gracious, reconciled father, as for all things, ſo eſpecially for all thoſe good things which are inviſible and eternal.

* To believe (in the Chriſtian ſenſe) is then to walk in the light of eternity; and to have a clear ſight

ſight of, and confidence in the Moſt High, reconciled to me through the Son of his love.

* 8. Now how highly deſirable is ſuch a faith, were it only on its own account? For how little does the wiſeſt of men know of any thing more than he can ſee with his eyes? What clouds and darkneſs cover the whole ſcene of things inviſible and eternal? What does he know even of himſelf as to his inviſible part? What of his future manner of exiſtence? How melancholy account does the prying, learned philoſopher, (perhaps the wiſeſt and beſt of all Heathens) the great, the venerable *Marcus Antoninus* give of theſe things? What was the reſult of all his ſerious reſearches? Of his high and deep contemplations? "Either diſſipation (of the ſoul as well as the body, into common, unthinking maſs) or re-abſorption into the univerſal fire, the unintelligent ſource of all things: or, ſome unknown manner of conſcious exiſtence, after the body ſinks to riſe no more." One of theſe three he ſuppoſed muſt ſucceed death, but which he had no light to determine. Poor *Antoninus!* With all his wealth, his honour, his power! With all his wiſdom and philoſophy!

"*What points of knowledge did he gain?*
That life is ſacred all—and vain!
Sacred how high? And vain how low?
He could not tell—But died to know."

* 9. He died to know! And ſo muſt you, unleſs you are now a partaker of Chriſtian faith. O conſider this. Nay, and conſider not only how little you know of the immenſity of the things that are beyond ſenſe and time, but how uncertainly do you know even that little? How faintly glimmering a light is that you have? Can you properly be ſaid to *know* any of theſe things? Is that knowledge any more than bare conjecture? And the reaſon is plain. You have no ſenſes ſuitable to inviſible or eternal objects. What *deſiderata* then, eſpecially to the rational, the reflecting part of mankind are theſe? A more extenſive knowledge of things inviſible and eternal: a greater certainty in whatever knowledge of them we have; and, in order to both, faculties capable of diſcerning things inviſible.

* 10. Is it not ſo? Let impartial reaſon ſpeak. Does not every thinking man want a window, not ſo much in his neighbour's, as in his own breaſt? He wants an opening there, of whatever kind, that might let in light from eternity. He is pained to be thus feeling after God ſo darkly, ſo uncertainly; to know ſo little of God, and indeed ſo little of any beſide material objects. He is concerned, that he muſt ſee even that little, not directly, but in the dim, ſullied glaſs of ſenſe; and conſequently ſo imperfectly and obſcurely, that it is all a mere *ænigma* ſtill.

* 11. Now theſe very *deſiderata* faith ſupplies. It gives a more extenſive knowledge of things inviſible,

inviſible, ſhewing what eye had not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither could it before enter into our heart to conceive. And all theſe it ſhews in the cleareſt light, with the fulleſt certainty and evidence. For it does not leave us to receive our notice of them by mere reflection from the dull glaſs of ſenſe; but reſolves a thouſand ænigmas of the higheſt concern by giving faculties ſuited to things inviſible. Oh! Who would not wiſh for ſuch a faith, were it only on theſe accounts? How much more, if by this I may receive the promiſe, I may attain all that holineſs and happineſs?

12. So Chriſtianity tells me; and ſo I find it, may every real Chriſtian ſay. I now am aſſured that theſe things are ſo; I experience them in my own breaſt. What Chriſtianity (conſidered as a doctrine) promiſed is accompliſhed in my ſoul. And Chriſtianity, conſidered as an inward principle, is the completion of all thoſe promiſes. It is holineſs and happineſs, the image of God impreſt on a created ſpirit; a fountain of peace and love ſpringing up into everlaſting life.

Sect. III. 1. And this I conceive to be the ſtrongeſt evidence of the truth of Chriſtianity. I do not undervalue traditional evidence. Let it have its place and its due honour. It is highly ſerviceable in its kind, and in its degree. And yet I cannot ſee it on a level with this.

* It is generally ſuppoſed, that traditional evi-

dence is weakened by length of time; as it muſt neceſſarily paſs through ſo many hands, in a continued ſucceſſion of ages. But no length of time can poſſibly affect the ſtrength of this internal evidence. It is equally ſtrong, equally new, through the courſe of ſeventeen hundred years. It paſſes now, even as it has done from the beginning, directly from God into the believing ſoul. Do you ſuppoſe time will ever dry up this ſtream? O no. It ſhall never be cut off.

Labitur & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

2. Traditional evidence is of an extremely complicated nature, neceſſarily including ſo many and ſo various conſiderations, that only men of a ſtrong and clear underſtanding can be ſenſible of its full force. On the contrary, how plain and ſimple is this? And how level to the loweſt capacity? Is not this the ſum? "One thing I know: I was blind, but now I ſee." An argument ſo plain, that a peaſant, a woman, a child may feel all its force.

* 3. The traditional evidence of Chriſtianity ſtands as it were a great way off; and therefore although it ſpeaks loud and clear, yet makes a leſs lively impreſſion. It gives us an account of what was tranſacted long ago, in far diſtant times as well as places. Whereas the inward evidence is intimately preſent to all perſons, at all times, and in all places. It is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy

thy heart, if thou believeſt in the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt. This* then *is the record*, this is the evidence, emphatically ſo called, *That* God *hath given unto us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.*

* 4. If then it were poſſible (which I conceive it is not) to ſhake the traditional evidence of Chriſtianity, ſtill he that has the internal evidence (and every true believer hath the witneſs or evidence in himſelf) would ſtand firm and unſhaken. Still he could ſay to thoſe who were ſtriking at the external evidence, "Beat on the ſack of *Anaxagoras*." But you can no more hurt *my* evidence of Chriſtianity, than the tyrant could hurt the ſpirit of that wiſe man.

5. I have ſometimes been almoſt inclined to believe, that the wiſdom of God has, in moſt later ages, permitted the external evidence of Chriſtianity to be more or leſs clogged and incumbered for this very end, that men (of reflection eſpecially) might not altogether reſt there, but be conſtrained to look into themſelves alſo, and attend to the light ſhining in their hearts.

Nay, it ſeems (if it be allowed for us to pry ſo far into the reaſons of the divine diſpenſations) that particularly in this age, God ſuffers all kind of objections to be raiſed againſt the traditional evidence of Chriſtianity, that men of underſtanding, though unwilling to give it up, yet, at the ſame time they defend this evidence, may not reſt the whole ſtrength of their cauſe thereon, but ſeek a deeper and firmer ſupport for it.

* 6. Without this, I cannot but doubt, whether they can long maintain their cauſe; whether, if they do not obey the loud call of God, and lay far more ſtreſs than they have hitherto done, on this internal evidence of Chriſtianity, they will not, one after another, give up the external, and (in heart at leaſt) go over to thoſe whom they are now contending with; ſo that in a century or two the people of *England* will be fairly divided into real Deiſts and real Chriſtians.

And I apprehend this would be no loſs at all, but rather an advantage to the Chriſtian cauſe; nay, perhaps it would be the ſpeedieſt, yea, the only effectual way of bringing all reaſonable Deiſts to be Chriſtians.

* 7. May I be permitted to ſpeak freely? May I, without offence, aſk of you that are called Chriſtians, what real loſs would you ſuſtain in giving up your preſent opinion, that the Chriſtian ſyſtem is of God? Though you bear the name, you are not Chriſtians; you have neither Chriſtian faith nor love. You have no divine evidence of things unſeen: you have not entered into the holieſt by the blood of *Jeſus*. You do not love God with all your heart; neither do you love your neighbour as yourſelf. You are neither happy nor holy. You have not learned in every ſtate therewith to be content; to rejoice evermore, even in want, pain, death; and in every thing to give thanks. You are not holy in heart; ſuperior to pride, to anger, to foolish

foolish desires. Neither are you holy in life: you do not walk as *Christ* also walked. Does not the main of *your* Christianity lie in your opinion? Decked with a few outward observances? For as to morality, even honest Heathen morality, (O let me utter a melancholy truth) many of those whom you stile Deists, there is reason to fear have far more of it than you.

* 8. Go on gentlemen and prosper. Shame these nominal Christians out of that poor superstition which they call Christianity. Reason, rally, laugh them out of their dead, empty forms, void of spirit, of faith, of love. Convince them, that such mean pageantry (for such it manifestly is, if there is nothing in the heart correspondent with the outward shew) is absolutely unworthy, you need not say of God, but even of any man that is endued with common understanding. Shew them, that while they are endeavouring to please God thus, they are only beating the air. Know your time; press on; push your victories, till you have conquered all that know not God. And then He, whom neither they nor you know now, shall rise and gird himself with strength, and go forth in his almighty love, and sweetly conquer you all together.

* 9. O that the time were come! How do I long for you to be partakers of the exceeding great and precious promise! How am I pained when I hear any of *you* using those silly terms, which the men of form have taught you, calling the

mention of the only thing you want, *Cant!* The deepeſt wiſdom, the higheſt happineſs, *Enthuſiaſm!* What ignorance is this? How extremely deſpicable would it make you in the eyes of any but a Chriſtian? But he cannot deſpiſe you, who loves you as his own ſoul, who is ready to lay down his life for your ſake.

10. Perhaps you will ſay, "But this internal evidence of Chriſtianity affects only thoſe in whom the promiſe is fulfilled. It is no evidence to *me*." There is truth in this objection. It does affect them chiefly; but it does not affect them only. It cannot, in the nature of things, be ſo ſtrong an evidence to others as it is to them. And yet it may bring a degree of evidence, it may reflect ſome light on you alſo.

For, firſt, You ſee the beauty and lovelineſs of Chriſtianity, when it is rightly underſtood. And you are ſure there is nothing to be deſired in compariſon of it.

Secondly, You know the ſcripture promiſes this, and ſays, It is attained by faith, and by no other way.

Thirdly, You ſee clearly how deſirable Chriſtian faith is, even on account of its own intrinſic value.

Fourthly, You are a witneſs, that the holineſs and happineſs above deſcribed can be attained no other way. The more you have laboured after virtue and happineſs, the more convinced you are of this. Thus far then you need not lean upon other

other men: thus far you have perſonal experience.

Fifthly, What reaſonable aſſurance can you have of things whereof you have not perſonal experience? Suppoſe the queſtion were, Can the blind be reſtored to ſight? This you have not yourſelf experienced. How then will you know that ſuch a thing ever was? Can there be an eaſier or ſurer way than to talk with one or ſome number of men who were blind, but are now reſtored to ſight? They cannot be deceived as to the fact in queſtion, the nature of the thing leaves no room for this. And if they are honeſt men (which you may learn from other circumſtances) they will not deceive you.

* Now transfer this to the caſe before us; and thoſe who were blind, but now ſee; thoſe who were ſick many years, but now are healed; thoſe who were miſerable, but now are happy, will afford *you* alſo a very ſtrong evidence of the truth of Chriſtianity; as ſtrong as can be in the nature of things, till you experience it in your own ſoul. And this, though it be allowed they are but plain men, and, in general, of weak underſtanding; nay, though ſome of them ſhould be miſtaken in other points, and hold opinions which cannot be defended.

11. All this may be allowed concerning the primitive fathers: I mean particularly *Clemens Romanus*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Origen*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Cyprian*;

to whom I would add *Macarius* and *Ephraim Syrus.*

I allow that ſome of theſe had not ſtrong natural ſenſe, that few of them had much learning, and none the aſſiſtances which our age enjoys, in ſome reſpects above all that went before.

Hence I doubt not but whoever will be at the pains of reading over their writing for that poor end, will find many miſtakes, many weak ſuppoſitions, and many ill-drawn concluſions.

* 12. And yet I exceedingly reverence them as well as their writings, and eſteem them very highly in love. I reverence them becauſe they were Chriſtians, ſuch Chriſtians as are above deſcribed. And I reverence their writings, becauſe they deſcribe true genuine Chriſtianity; and direct us to the ſtrongeſt evidence of the Chriſtian doctrine.

Indeed in addreſſing the Heathens of thoſe times they intermix other arguments; particularly, that drawn from the numerous miracles, which were then performed in the church; which they needed only to open their eyes and ſee daily wrought in the face of the ſun.

But ſtill they never relinquiſh this; "What the ſcripture promiſes I enjoy. Come and ſee what Chriſtianity has done here: and acknowledge it is of God."

* I reverence theſe antient Chriſtians (with all their failings) the more, becauſe I ſee ſo few Chriſtians now; becauſe I read ſo little in the writings

writings of later times, and hear ſo little of genuine Chriſtianity: and becauſe moſt of the modern Chriſtians (ſo called) not content with being wholly ignorant of it, are deeply prejudiced againſt it, calling it enthuſiaſm, and I know not what.

That the God of power and love may make both them, and you, and me, ſuch Chriſtians as thoſe fathers were, is the earneſt prayer of,

Rev. Sir, your real friend and ſervant.

Jan. 24, 1748-9.

A

LETTER

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

The Lord Biſhop of GLOCESTER.

Occaſioned by his tract on the

OFFICE and OPERATIONS

OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT.

My LORD,

YOUR lordſhip well obſerves, " to employ *buffoonery* in the ſervice of religion is to violate the majeſty of truth, and to deprive it of a fair hearing. To examine, men muſt be *ſerious*†." I will endeavour to be ſo, in all the following

† Preface, p. 22.

following pages. And the rather, not only becauſe I am writing to a perſon who is ſo far, and in ſo many reſpects, my ſuperior, but alſo becauſe of the importance of the ſubject. For is the queſtion only, What I am? A madman, or a man in his ſenſes? A knave, or an honeſt man? No: this is only brought in by way of illuſtration. The queſtion is, of the office and operation of the Holy Spirit; with which the doctrine of the New-Birth, and indeed the whole of real religion is connected. On a ſubject of ſo deep concern, I deſire to be ſerious as death. But, at the ſame time, your Lordſhip will permit me to uſe great plainneſs. And this I am the more, emboldened to do, becauſe by naming my name your Lordſhip, as it were, condeſcends to meet me on even ground.

I ſhall conſider, firſt, what your Lordſhip advances concerning me; and then what is advanced concerning the operations of the Holy Spirit.

I. Firſt, concerning me. It is true, I am here dealing in *crambe repetita:* reciting objections which have been urged and anſwered an hundred times. But as your Lordſhip is pleaſed to repeat them again, I am obliged to repeat the anſwers.

Your Lordſhip begins ‡, "If the *falſe prophet* pretend to ſome *extraordinary* meaſure of the ſpirit,

‡ p. 117.

ſpirit, we are directed to try that ſpirit by *James* chap. iii. 17." I anſwer, 1. (as I have done many times before) I do not pretend to any *extraordinary* meaſure of the ſpirit. I pretend to no other meaſure of it than may be claimed by every Chriſtian miniſter. 2. Where are we directed to *try prophets* by this text? How does it appear, that it was given for any ſuch purpoſe? It is certain, we may *try Chriſtians* hereby, whether they are real or pretended ones. But I know not that either St. *James* or any other inſpired writer, gives us the leaſt hint of *trying prophets* thereby.

Your lordſhip adds, "In this rule or direction for the *trial of ſpirits*, the marks are to be applied only *negatively*. The man in whom they are not found, hath not the *wiſdom from above*. But we are not to conclude, that he has it, in whom any or all of them are found†." We are not to conclude, that he is a prophet: for the apoſtle ſays nothing about prophets. But may we not conclude, the man in whom all theſe are found, has *the wiſdom from above?* Surely we may: for theſe are the eſſential parts of that wiſdom. And can he have *all the parts*, and not have *the whole?*

Is not this enough to ſhew, that the apoſtle is here giving "a ſet of marks, not to detect *impoſtor-prophets*," but *impoſtor-Chriſtians?* Thoſe that impoſe either upon themſelves or others, as if they were Chriſtians, when they are not?

In

† p. 118.

In what follows, I ſhall ſimply conſider the argument, without directly addreſſing your lordſhip.

" Apply theſe marks to the features of modern *fanatics*, eſpecially Mr. *John Weſley*. He has laid claim to almoſt *every apoſtolic gift*, in *as full and ample* a manner as they were poſſeſſed of old‡."

The *miraculous gifts* beſtowed upon the apoſtles are enumerated in two places. Firſt, *Mark* xvi. 17, 18. *In my name they ſhall caſt out devils: they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues: they ſhall take up ſerpents: if they drink any deadly thing, it ſhall not hurt them: they ſhall lay hands on the ſick, and they ſhall recover.* Second, 1. *Cor.* xii. 8, 9, 10. *To one is given the word of wiſdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another the gifts of healing, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the diſcernment of ſpirits, to another tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

Do " I lay claim to *almoſt every one* of theſe, in as *full and ample* a manner as they were poſſeſſed of old ?"

Five of them are enumerated in the former catalogue: to three of which, *ſpeaking with new tongues*, *taking up ſerpents*, *drinking deadly things*, it is not even pretended, I lay any claim at all. In the latter, nine are enumerated. And as to ſeven of theſe, none has yet ſeen good to call me in queſtion: miraculous *wiſdom*, or *knowledge*, or

‡ p. 119.

or *faith, prophecy, diſcernment of ſpirits*, ſtrange *tongues*, and *the interpretation of tongues*. What becomes then of the aſſertion, that I lay claim to *almoſt every one* of them, in the moſt *full* and *ample* manner?

Do I lay claim to *any one* of them? To prove that I do, my own words are produced, extracted from an account of the occurrences of about ſixteen years.

I ſhall ſet them down, naked and unadorned. 1. *May* 13, 1740. "The devil ſtirred up his ſervants to make all the noiſe they could. 2. *May* 3, 1741. I explained to a vaſt multitude of people, *what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.* The devil's children fought valiantly for their maſter, that his kingdom ſhould not be deſtroyed. And many ſtones fell on my right hand and my left. 3. *April* 3, 1740. Some or other of the children of Belial, had laboured to diſturb us ſeveral nights before. Now all the ſtreet was filled with people, ſhouting, curſing, ſwearing, and ready to ſwallow the ground with rage ¶. 4. *June* 27, 1747. I found only one perſon among them, who knew the love of God, before my brother came. No wonder the devil was ſo ſtill: *for his goods were in peace.* 5. *April* 29, 1753. I preached at *Durham* to a quiet, ſtupid congregation †. 6. *May* 9, 1730. I was a little ſuprized, at ſome who were buffeted -

¶ p. 120. † p. 121.

ed of Satan in an unuſual manner, by ſuch a ſpirit of laughter, as they could in no wiſe reſiſt. I could ſcarce have believed the account they gave me had I not known the ſame thing ten or eleven years ago, " when both my brother and I were ſeized in the ſame manner." (If any man calls this hyſterics, I am not concerned : I think and let think.) 7. *May* 21, 1740. In the evening, ſuch a ſpirit of laughter was among us, that many were much offended. But the attention of all was ſoon fixt on poor *L*—— *S*——, whom we all knew to be no diſſembler. One ſo violently and variouſly torn of the evil one, did I never ſee before. Sometimes ſhe laughed till almoſt ſtrangled ; then broke out into curſing and blaſpheming. At laſt ſhe faintly called on Chriſt to help her. And the violence of her pangs ceaſed." (Let any who pleaſe impute this likewiſe to hyſterics. Only permit me to think otherwiſe.) 8. " *May* 17, 1740. I found more and more undeniable proofs, that we have need to watch and pray every moment. Outward trials indeed were now removed. But ſo much the more did inward trials abound ; and *if one member ſuffered, all the members ſuffered with it.* So ſtrange a ſympathy did I never obſerve before whatever conſiderable temptation fell on any one, unaccountably ſpreading itſelf to the reſt : ſo that exceeding few were able to eſcape it†"

I know not what theſe eight quotations prove, but

† p. 122, 123.

but that I believe the devil ſtill variouſly tempts and troubles good men; while he *works with energy in the children of diſobedience.* Certainly they do not prove that I lay claim to any of the preceding gifts. Let us ſee whither any more is proved, by the ten next quotations. 1. "So many living witneſſes hath God given, that his hand is ſtill ſtretched out to heal," (namely, the ſouls of ſinners as the whole paragraph fixes the ſenſe,) "and that ſigns and wonders are even now wrought †," namely in the converſion of the greateſt ſinners. 2. "Among the poor colliers of *Placey*, *Jo. Lane*, then nine or ten years old, was one of the firſt that found peace with God ‡. 3. Mrs. *Nowers* ſaid, her little ſon appeared to have a continual fear of God, and an awful ſenſe of his preſence——A few days ſince (ſhe ſaid) he broke out into prayers aloud, and ſaid, "I ſhall go to heaven ſoon." This child (when he began to have the fear of God) was (as his parents ſaid) juſt three years old. 4. I did receive that "account of the young woman of *Mancheſter* from her own mouth." But I paſs no judgment on it, good or bad: nor 5. On "the *trance*, §" (as her mother called it) of *S. T.* neither denying, nor affirming the truth of it. 6. "You deny that God does work thoſe effects; at leaſt that he works them in this manner: I affirm both. I have ſeen very many perſons changed in a moment, from

† p. 124. ‡ ibid. § p. 126.

from the ſpirit of fear, horror, deſpair, to the ſpirit of love joy and praiſe.——In ſeveral of them this change was wrought in a dream, or during a ſtrong repreſentation to their mind, of Chriſt either on the croſs, or in glory ‖."

" But here the ſymptoms of grace and of perdition are interwoven and confounded with one another ¶." No. Tho' light followed darkneſs yet they were not interwoven, much leſs confounded with each other. 7. " But ſome imputed the work to the force of imagination, or even to the deluſion of the devil†." They did ſo; which made me ſay, 8. " I fear we have grieved the ſpirit of the jealous God, by queſtioning his work ‡." 9. " Yet he ſays himſelf, theſe ſymptoms I can no more impute to any natural cauſe, than to the Spirit God. I make no doubt, it was Satan tearing them, as they were coming § to Chriſt." But *theſe ſymptoms*, and *the work* mentioned before, are wholly different things. The *work* ſpoken of is the converſion of ſinners to God: theſe *ſymptoms* are cries, and bodily pain. The very next inſtance makes this plain. 10. " I viſited a poor old woman. Her trials had been uncommon: inexpreſſible agonies of mind, joined with all ſorts of bodily pain: not, it ſeemed, from any natural cauſe, but the direct operation ‖‖ of Satan."

Neither

‖ p. 127. ¶ p. 128. † ibid. ‡ ibid. § p. 129.
‖‖ p. 130.

Neither do any of thoſe quotations prove, that I lay claim to any *miraculous* gift.

" Such was the evangelic ſtate of things, when Mr. *W.* firſt entered on this miniſtry: who ſeeing himſelf ſurrounded with ſubjects, ſo harmoniouſly diſpoſed, thus triumphantly exults." ——To illuſtrate this, let us add the date. " Such was the evangelic ſtate of things, *Aug.* 9, 1750. (On that day, I preached that *ſermon:*) when Mr. *W. firſt entered on this miniſtry.*" Nay, that was in the year 1738. So I triumphed, becauſe I ſaw what would be twelve years after!

Let us ſee what the ten next quotations prove. 1. " In applying theſe words, *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, my ſoul was ſo enlarged, that methought I could have cried out, (in another ſenſe than poor, vain *Archimedes*) Give me where to ſtand and I will ſhake the ‡ earth." I meant neither more nor leſs, though I will not juſtify the uſe of ſo ſtrong an expreſſion) than I was ſo deeply penetrated with a ſenſe of the love of God to ſinners, that it ſeemed, if I could have declared it to all the world, they could not but be moved thereby.

" Here then was a ſcene well prepared for a good actor, and excellently *fitted up* for *the part* he was to † play." But how came ſo good an actor to begin playing *the part*, twelve years before the ſcene was *fitted up?*

" He

‡ p. 130. † p. 131.

" He ſets out with declaring his miſſion. 2. I cried aloud, *All things are ready : come ye to the marriage.* I then delivered my meſſage." And does not every miniſter do the ſame whenever he preaches ?

But how is this ? " He *ſets out* with declaring his miſſion ?" Nay, but this was ten years *after* my *ſetting* out !

3. " My heart was not wholly reſigned. Yet I know he heard my voice†. 4. The longer I ſpoke the more ſtrength I had : till at twelve, I was as one refreſhed with wine ‡. 5. I explained the nature of inward religion, words flowing upon me faſter than I could ſpeak§. 6. I intended to have given an exhortation to the ſociety. But as ſoon as we met, the Spirit of ſupplication fell upon us, (on the congregation as well as me) ſo that I could hardly do any thing but pray and give ‖ thanks." I believe every true Chriſtian may experience all that is contained in theſe three inſtances. 7. " The ſpirit of prayer was ſo poured upon us all, that we could only ſpeak to God¶. 8. Many were ſeated on a wall, which in the middle of the ſermon fell down ; but not one was hurt at all. Nor was there any interruption, either of my ſpeaking, or of the attention of the hearers††. 9. The mob had juſt broke open the doors, and while they burſt in at one door, we walked out at the other. Nor did one man take any notice of us, though we were within five yards

† p. 132. ‡ p. 133. § ibid. ‖ ibid. ¶ ibid. †† p. 134.

yards of † each other." The fact was juſt ſo. I do not attempt to account for it; becauſe I cannot. 10. "The next miracle was on his friends." They were no friends of mine. I had ſeen few of them before in my life. Neither do I ſay or think it was any miracle at all, that they were all "ſilent while I ſpake;" or that "the moment I had done, the chain fell off, and they all began talking at once."

Do any, or all of theſe quotations prove, that I "lay claim to *almoſt every* miraculous gift?"

Will the eight following quotations prove any more? 1. "Some heard perfectly well on the ſide of the oppoſite hill, which was ſeven-ſcore yards from the place where ‡ I ſtood." I believe they did, as it was a calm day, and the hill roſe gradually like a theatre. 2. "What I here aver is the naked fact. Let every one account for it as he ſees good. My horſe was exceeding lame. And my head ached much. I thought, cannot God heal man or beaſt, by means, or without? Immediately my wearineſs and head-ache ceaſed, and my horſe's lameneſs in the ſame inſtant‖." It was ſo: and I believe thouſands of ſerious Chriſtians, have found as plain anſwers to prayer as this. 3. *William Kirkman*'s § caſe proves only, that God does what pleaſes him; not that I make myſelf either "a great ſaint, or a great phyſician." 4. "*R. A.* was freed at once, without any human means, from a diſtemper naturally incura-

† p. 135. ‡ ibid. ‖ p. 136. § p. 137.

curable‡." He was: but it was before I knew him. So what is that to me? 5. I found Mr. *Lunell* in a violent fever. He revived the moment he saw me, and began to recover from that time. Perhaps for this also was I sent.§" I mean, perhaps this was one end, for which the providence of God brought me thither at that time. 6. "In the evening I called upon *Ann Calcut.*" She had been speechless for some time. But almost as soon as we began to pray, God restored her speech. And from that hour the fever left her. 7. I visited several ill of the spotted fever, which had been extremely mortal. But God had said, *Hitherto shalt thou come.* I believe there was not one with whom we were, but he recovered‖. 8. Mr. *Meyrick* had been speechless and senseless for some time. A few of us joined in prayer. Before we had done, his sense and his speech returned. Others may account for this by natural causes. I believe this is the power of God¶."

But what does all this prove? Not that I claim any gift above other men; but only that I believe God now hears and answers prayer, even beyond the ordinary course of nature. Otherwise the clerk was in the right, who (in order to prevent the *fanaticism* of his rector) told him, "Sir, you should not pray for fair weather yet; for the moon does not change till Saturday."

While the two accounts†, which are next recited,

‡ p. 138. § ibid. ‖ p. 139. ¶ ibid. † p. 143——146.

cited, lay before me, a venerable old clergyman calling upon me, I aſked him, " Sir, would you adviſe me to publiſh theſe ſtrange relations, or not?" He anſwered, " Are you ſure of the facts?" I replied, " As ſure as that I am alive." " Then " ſaid he, publiſh them in God's name, and be " not careful about the event."

The ſhort of the caſe is this. Two young women were tormented of the devil, in an uncommon manner. Several ſerious perſons deſired my brother and me to pray with them. We (with many others) did, and they were delivered. But where mean time were " the exorciſms in form, according to the *Roman* faſhion?" I never uſed them. I never ſaw them. I know nothing about them.

" Such were the bleſſings which Mr. *W. diſtributed* among his friends. For his enemies he had in ſtore, the *judgments* of heaven†." Did I then ever *diſtribute* or profeſs to diſtribute theſe? Do I *claim* any ſuch power? This is the preſent queſtion. Let us calmly conſider the eight quotations brought to prove it.

1. " I preached at *Darlaſton*, late a den of lions. But the fierceſt of them God has called away, by a train of ſurprizing ‡ ſtrokes." But not by me. I was not there. 2. " I preached at *R.* late a place of furious riot and perſecution: but quiet and calm, ſince the bitter rector is gone to give an account of himſelf to God §. 3. Hence

† p. 144. ‡ ibid. § p. 145.

Hence we rode to *T——n*, where the minister was slowly recovering from a violent fit of the palsy with which he was struck immediately after he had been preaching a virulent sermon ‡ against the *Methodists*. 4. The case ‖ of Mr. *W——n* was dreadful indeed, and too notorious to be denied. 5. One of the chief of those who came to make the disturbance on the first instant hanged himself §. 6. I was quite surprized when I heard Mr. *R.* preach: that soft, smooth, tuneful voice, which he so often employed to blaspheme the work of God, was lost, without hope of recovery ¶. 7. Mr. *C.* spoke so much in favour of the rioters, that they were all discharged. A few days after, walking over the same field, he dropt down, and spoke no more.†"

And what is the utmost that can be inferred from all these passages? That I *believe* these things to have been judgments. What if I did? To *believe* things are judgments is one thing; to *claim* a power of inflicting judgments, is another. If indeed I *believe* things to be judgments which are not, I am to blame. But still this is not *claiming any miraculous gift*.

But "you cite one who forbid your speaking to some dying criminals, to answer for their souls at the judgment-seat of Christ ‡‡." I do: but be this right or wrong, it is not "claiming a power to *inflict judgments*."

‡ p. 145. ‖ ibid. § p. 146. ¶ ibid. † p. 147. ‡‡ ibid.

"Yes it is: for theſe judgments are fulminated with the air of one who had the divine vengeance at his diſpoſal †." I think not: and I believe all impartial men will be of the ſame mind.

"Theſe are ſome of the *extraordinary gifts* which Mr. *W.* ‡ claims." I claim no *extraordinary gift* at all. Nor has any thing to the contrary been proved yet, ſo much as in a ſingle inſtance.

"We come now to the application of this ſovereign teſt, *James* iii. 17." But let us ſee that we underſtand it firſt. I beg leave to conſider the whole. *Who is a wiſe and knowing man among you? Let him ſhew his wiſdom*, as well as his faith, by *his works* not by words only. *But if ye have bitter zeal and ſtrife in your heart, do not glory and lie againſt the truth:* as if any ſuch zeal, any thing contrary to love, could conſiſt with true wiſdom. *This wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh. For where bitter zeal and ſtrife are, there is confuſion and every evil work. But the wiſdom which is from above* (which every one that hath is a real Chriſtian, and he only) *is firſt pure*, free from all that is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh; *then peaceable*, benign, loving, making peace; *gentle*, ſoft, mild, yielding, not moroſe, or ſour; *eaſy to be intreated*, to be perſuaded or convinced, not ſtubborn, ſelf-willed, or ſelf-conceited; *full of mercy*,

† p. 147. ‡ p. 149.

mercy, of tenderneſs and compaſſion; *and good fruits*, both in the heart and life. Two of theſe are immediately ſpecified, *without partiality*, loving and doing good to all, without reſpect of perſons, *and without hypocriſy*, ſincere, frank, open.

I deſire to be tried by this teſt. I try myſelf by it continually: not indeed whether I am a *prophet* (for it has nothing to do with this) but whether I am a *Chriſtian*.

I. The preſent queſtion then is, (not what is Mr. *Law*, or what are the *Moravians*, but) what is *John Weſley?* And 1. Is he *pure* or not? "Not pure: for he ſeparates reaſon from grace†." A wonderful proof! But I deny the fact. I never did ſeparate reaſon from grace. "Yes you do. For your own words are, the points we chiefly inſiſted on were four. 1. That *orthodoxy* or *right opinion*, is at beſt but a very ſlender part of religion; if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all‡."

After premiſing, that it is our boun len duty to labour after a *right judgment* in all things, as a *wrong judgment* naturally leads to wrong *practice*: I ſay again, *right opinion* is at beſt but a very *ſlender part* of religion (which properly and directly conſiſts in right tempers, words and actions,) and frequently it is *no part* of religion. For it may be, where there is no religion at all: in men

† p. 156. ‡ p. 157.

of the moſt abandoned lives: yea, in the devil himſelf.

And yet this does not prove, that I "ſeparate reaſon from grace," that I "diſcard reaſon from the ſervice of religion." I do continually "employ it to diſtinguiſh between right and wrong opinions." I never affirmed, "this diſtinction to be of little conſequence," or denied "the goſpel to be *a reaſonable ſervice*†."

But "the apoſtle Paul conſidered *right opinion*, as a full third part at leaſt of religion. For he ſays, *the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodneſs, and righteouſneſs, and truth.* By *goodneſs* is meant the conduct of particulars to the whole, and conſiſts in habits and ſocial virtue, and this refers to *Chriſtian practice.* By *righteouſneſs* is meant the conduct of the whole to particulars, and conſiſts in the gentle uſe of church authority. And this refers to *Chriſtian diſcipline.* By *truth* is meant the conduct of the whole, and of particulars to one another, and conſiſt in *orthodoxy* or *right opinion*; and this refers to *Chriſtian doctrine*‡."

My objections to this account are, 1. It contradicts St. *Paul.* 2. It contradicts itſelf.

Firſt, It contradicts St. *Paul.* It fixes a meaning upon his words, foreign both to the text and context. The plain ſenſe of the text taken in connexion with the context, is no other than this. *The fruit* § *of the Spirit* (rather, *of the light*, which *Bengelius*

† p. 158. ‡ p. 159. § Eph. v. 9.

Bengelius proves to be the true reading, oppoſite to *the unfruitful works of darkneſs*, mentioned, ver. 11.) it conſiſts *in all goodneſs*, *kindneſs*, *tender-heartedneſs*; (chap. iv. 32.) oppoſite to *bitterneſs*, *wrath*, *anger*, *clamour*, *evil-ſpeaking*, (ver. 31.) *in all righteouſneſs*, rendering unto all their dues; oppoſite to *ſtealing*, (ver. 28.) *and in all truth*, veracity, ſincerity; oppoſite to *lying* (ver. 25.)

Secondly, That interpretation contradicts itſelf; and that in every article. For 1. If by *goodneſs* be meant the conduct of *particulars to the whole*, then it does not conſiſt in habits of *ſocial virtue*. For *ſocial virtue* regulates the conduct of particulars, not ſo properly to the whole as to each other. 2. If by *righteouſneſs* be meant the conduct of *the whole to particulars*, then it cannot conſiſt in the gentleneſs of church-authority; unleſs *church governors* are the *whole church*, or the parliament, the whole nation. 3. If by *truth* be meant, the conduct of the whole, and of particulars to one another, then it cannot poſſibly conſiſt in *orthodoxy or right opinion*. For *opinion*, right or wrong, is not conduct. They differ *toto genere*. If then it be *orthodoxy*, it is not "the *conduct* of the governors and governed toward each other". If it be their *conduct* toward each other, it is not *orthodoxy*.

Although therefore it be allowed, that right opinions are a great help, and wrong opinions a great hindrance to religion, yet till ſtronger

proof be brought againſt it, that propoſition remains unſhaken, " right opinions are a ſlender part of religion, if any part of it at all †."

(As to the affair of Abbe *Paris* whoever will read over with calmneſs and impartiality but one volume of monſieur *Montgeron*, will then be a competent judge. Mean time I would juſt obſerve that if theſe miracles were real, they ſtrike at the root of the whole papal authority ; as having been wrought in direct oppoſition to the famous Bull *Unigenitus* ‡.)

Yet I do not ſay, " Errors in faith have little to do with religion ;" or that they " are no let or impediment to the Holy Spirit §." But ſtill it is true, that " God (generally ſpeaking) begins his work ‖ at the heart." Men uſually feel *deſires* to pleaſe God, before they know how to pleaſe him. Their *heart* ſays, " What muſt I do to be ſaved ?" Before they *underſtand* the way of ſalvation.

But ſee " the character he gives his own ſaints !" The more I converſe with this people the more I am amazed. That God hath wrought a great work is manifeſt, (by ſaving many ſinners from their ſins.) And yet the " main of them are not able to give a rational account of the plainſt principles of religion." They were not able then, as there had not been time to inſtruct them. But the caſe is far different *now*.

Again,

† p. 160. ‡ p. 161. § p. 162. ‖ ibid.

Again, Did I " give this character" even then, of the people called *Methodiſts*, in *general?* No, but of the people of a *particular* town in *Ireland*, where nine in ten of the inhabitants are Romaniſts.

" Nor is the obſervation confined to the people. He had made a proſelyte of Mr. *D.* vicar of *B.* And to ſhew he was no diſcredit to his maſter, he gives him this character. " He ſeemed to ſtagger at nothing, though as yet his underſtanding is not opened."†

Mr. *D.* was never a proſelyte of mine; nor did I ever ſee him before or ſince. I endeavoured to ſhew him, that we *are juſtified by faith.* And he did not object; though neither did he *underſtand.*

" But in the firſt propagation of religion, God began with *underſtanding*, and rational conviction won the *heart.*"‡ Frequently, but not always. The jailor's *heart* was touched firſt, then he *underſtood* what he *muſt do to be ſaved.* In this reſpect then there is nothing *new* in the preſent work of God. So the lively ſtory from *Moliere* is juſt nothing to the purpoſe.

In drawing the parallel between the work God has wrought in *England* and in *America*, I do not ſo much as " inſinuate, § that the underſtanding has nothing to do in the work." Whoever is engaged therein will find full employment for all the underſtanding which God has given him.

† p. 162. ‡ p. 163. § p. 165.

" On the whole therefore we conclude, that wiſdom which diveſts the Chriſtian faith of its *truth*, and the teſt of it, *reaſon*——and reſolves all religion into ſpiritual *myſticiſm* and *extatic raptures*, cannot be the wiſdom from above, whoſe characteriſtic is *purity*." ‖

Perhaps ſo, but *I* do not " diveſt faith, either of truth or reaſon; much leſs do I reſolve all into *ſpiritual myſticiſm* and *extatic raptures*." Therefore ſuppoſe *purity* here meant *ſound doctrine*, (which it no more means than it does a ſound conſtitution) ſtill it touches not *me*, who for any thing that has yet been ſaid, may teach the *ſoundeſt doctrine* in the world.

2. " Our next buſineſs is to apply the other marks to theſe *pretending ſectaries*. The firſt of theſe *purity*, reſpects the nature of *the wiſdom from above*, or in other words, ¶ the *doctrine* taught." Not in the leaſt. It has no more to do with *doctrine*, than the whole text has with *prophets*. " All the reſt concern the *manner* of teaching." Neither can this be allowed. They no farther concern either teaching or teachers, than they concern all mankind.

But to proceed. " *Methodiſm* ſignifies only the *manner of preaching*; not either an *old* or a *new* religion; it is the *manner* in which Mr. *W.* and his followers attempt to propagate the *plain old religion*."† And is not this *ſound doctrine?* Is this *ſpiritual myſticiſm* and *extatic raptures?*

" Of

‖ p. 166. ¶ p. 167. † p. 168.

" Of all men, Mr. *W.* ſhould beſt know the meaning of the term; ſince it was not a *nick-name* impoſed on the ſect by its enemies, but an appellation of honour beſtowed upon it by themſelves." In anſwer to this, I need only tranſcribe what was publiſhed twenty years ago.‡

" Since the name firſt came abroad into the world, many have been at a loſs to know what a *Methodiſt* is; what are the *principles* and *practice* of thoſe who are commonly called by that name; and what are the *diſtinguiſhing marks* of the ſect, *which is every where ſpoken againſt.*

" And it being generally believed that I was able to give the cleareſt account of theſe things (as having been one of the firſt to whom the name was given, and the perſon by whom the reſt were ſuppoſed to be directed) I have been called upon in all manner of ways, and with the utmoſt earneſtneſs ſo to do. I yield at laſt to the continued importunity, both of friends and enemies; and do now give the cleareſt account I can, in the preſence of the Lord, the Judge of heaven and earth, of the *principles* and *practice* whereby thoſe who are called *Methodiſts* are diſtinguiſhed from other men.

" I ſay *thoſe who are called Methodiſts*; for let it be well obſerved, that this is *not a name which they take upon themſelves*, but one *fixed on them* by way of reproach, without their approbation or conſent. It was firſt given to three or four

‡ Preface to " the character of a *Methodiſt*."

young men at *Oxford*, by a ſtudent of *Chriſt's Church*; either in alluſion to the antient ſect of phyſicians ſo called, (from their teaching, that almoſt all diſeaſes might be cured by a ſpecific *method of diet* and *exerciſe*) or from their obſerving a more *regular method* of ſtudy and behaviour than was uſual with thoſe of their age and ſtation."

I need only add, that this nick-name was impoſed upon us before *this manner of preaching* had a being. Yea, at a time when I thought it as lawful to cut a throat, as to preach *out of a church*.

" Why then will Mr. *W.* ſo groſsly miſrepreſent his adverſaries, as to ſay, that when they ſpeak againſt *Methodiſm*, they ſpeak againſt the *plain, old doctrine* of the church of *England?*"§ This is no miſrepreſentation. Many of our adverſaries, all over the kingdom, ſpeak againſt us, *eo nomine*, for preaching *theſe doctrines, juſtification by faith* in particular.

However, " a *fanatic manner* of preaching, though it were the doctrine of an apoſtle, may do more harm to ſociety at leaſt, than reviving *old* hereſies, or inventing *new*. It tends to bewilder the imaginations of ſome, to inflame the paſſions of others, and to ſpread diſorder and confuſion through the whole community."‖ I would gladly have the term defined. What is " a *fanatic manner* of preaching?" Is it *field-preaching?*

§ ibid. ‖ p. 169.

preaching? But this has no ſuch effect, even among the wildeſt of men. This has not "bewildered the imagination," even of the *Kingswood* colliers, or "inflamed their paſſions." It has not ſpread diſorder or confuſion among them, but juſt the contrary. From the time it was heard in that chaos,

Confuſion heard the voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd, and order from diſorder ſprung.

"But St. *James*, who delivers the teſt for the trial of theſe mens pretenſions,"—(the ſame miſtake ſtill) "unqueſtionably thought a fanatic ſpirit did more miſchief in the *mode* of teaching, than in the *matter* taught: ſince of ſix marks, *one* only concerns *doctrine*, all the reſt the *manners* of the teacher."¶ Nay, all ſix concern *doctrine* as much as one. The truth is, they have nothing to do either with *doctrine* or *manner*.

"From St. *Paul*'s words, *Be inſtant, in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon*, he infers more than they will bear; and miſapplies them into the bargain."† When and where? I do not remember applying them at all.

"When *ſeaſonable* times are appointed for holy offices to fly to *unſeaſonable*, is factious."‡ But it is not clear, that five in the morning and

¶ p. 170. † p. 171. ‡ p. 172.

ſeven in the evening (our uſual times) are *unſeaſonable.*

We come now directly to the ſecond article. "*The wiſdom from above is peaceable.* But the propagation of *Methodiſm* has occaſioned many and great violations of peace.† In order to know where the blame hereof lies, let us inquire into the temper which *makes for peace.* For we may be aſſured the fault lies not there, where ſuch a temper is found." Thus far we are quite agreed. "Now the temper which makes for peace is *prudence.*" This is *one* of the tempers which make for peace; others are kindneſs, meekneſs, patience. "This our Lord recommended by his own example.‡ But this Mr. *W.* calls *the myſtery of iniquity, and the offspring of hell.*"§ No, not this; not the prudence which our Lord recommends. I call that ſo, and that only, which *the world*, the men who know not God, ſtile *Chriſtian prudence.* By this I mean ſubtilty, craft, diſſimulation; ſtudy to pleaſe man rather than God; the art of trimming between God and the world, of ſerving God and mammon. Will any ſerious man defend this? And *this* only do I condemn.

But you "ſay, *good ſort of men*, as they are called, are *the bane of all religion.*"‖ And I think ſo. By this *good ſort of men*, I mean, perſons who have a liking to, but no *ſenſe* of religion: no

† p. 173. ‡ p. 174—177. § p. 178. ‖ p. 179, 180.

no real fear or love of God; no truly Chriſtian tempers. "Theſe ſteal away the little *zeal* he has, that is, perſuade him to be peaceable." No; perſuade me to be like themſelves; without love either to God or man.

"Again, ſpeaking of one, he ſays, Indulging himſelf in *harmleſs company*." (Vulgarly ſo called.) "He firſt made ſhipwreck of his *zeal*, then of his *faith*. In this I think he is right. The *zeal* and *faith* of a *fanatic* are ſuch exact tallies, that neither can exiſt alone. They came into the world together, to diſturb ſociety and diſhonour religion."

By *zeal* I mean the flame of love, or fervent love to God and man: by *faith* the ſubſtance or confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen. Is this the *zeal* and *faith* of a *fanatic?* Then St. *Paul* was the greateſt fanatic on earth. Did theſe come into the world to *diſturb ſociety* and *diſhonour religion?*

"On the whole we find Mr. *W.* by *his own confeſſion*, intirely deſtitute of *prudence*.† Therefore it muſt be aſcribed to the want of this, if his preaching be attended with tumult and diſorder." By *his own confeſſion?* Surely no. This I confeſs, and this only: what is falſely called *prudence*, I abhor: but *true prudence* I love and admire.

However, "you ſet at nought the diſcipline of the church, by invading the province of the parochial

† p. 181.

parochial miniſter."† Nay, if ever I preach at all, it muſt be in the province of ſome parochial miniſter: "by aſſembling in undue places, and at unfit times." I know of no times unfit for thoſe who aſſemble. And I believe *Hannam Mount* and *Roſegreen* were the moſt proper places under heaven, for preaching to the colliers in *Kingswood:* "by *ſcurrilous invectives* againſt the governors and paſtors of the national church." This is an entire miſtake. I dare not make any *ſcurrilous invectives* againſt any man. "*Inſolencies* of this nature provoke warm men to tumult." But theſe *inſolencies* do not exiſt. So that whatever tumult either warm or cool men raiſe, I am not chargeable therewith.

"To know the *true character* of *Methodiſm*." The preſent point is, to know the *true character* of *John Weſley*. Now in order to know this, we need not inquire what others were, before he was born. All therefore that follows, ‡ of old. *Preciſians*, *Puritans* and *Independents*, may ſtand juſt as it is.

But "Mr. *W.* *wanted* to be perſecuted."§ As this is averred over and over, I will explain myſelf upon it, once for all. I never deſired, or *wanted* to be perſecuted.

Lives there who loves his pain?

I love, and deſire to *live peaceably with all men.* "But

† p. 182. ‡ p. 284—186. § p. 187.

" But perfecution would not come at his call." However it came uncalled: and more than once or twice, it was not " *mock perfecution*." It was not only the *huzzas* of the mob: fhowers of ftones are fomething more than *huzzas*. And whofoever faw the *mob* either at *Walfal* or *Cork* (to inftance in no more) faw that they were not " in jeft," but in great earneft, eagerly athirft, not for *fport*, (as you fuppofe) but for *blood*.

But though I do not *defire* perfecution, I *expect* it. I muft, if I believe St. *Paul: all that will live godly in Chrift Jefus, fhall fuffer perfecution*:† either fooner or later, more or lefs, according to the wife providence of God. But I believe, *all* thefe *things work together for good, to them that love God*. And from a conviction of this, they may even *rejoice*, when they are *perfecuted for righteoufnefs fake*.

Yet as I feldom " complain of ill treatment," fo I am never " *diffatisfied* with good ‡." But I often wonder at it. And I once expreffed my wonder, nearly in the words of the old *Athenian*, " What have we done, that the world fhould be fo civil to us?"

You conclude the head, " As he who perfecutes, is but the tool of him that invites perfecution," (I know not who does) " the crime finally comes home to him who fet the rioter at work.§"

† 2 Tim. iii. 12. ‡ p. 188. § p. 194.

work." And is this all the proof, that I am not *peaceable?* Then let all men judge, if the charge is made good.

3. " The next mark of the celeſtial wiſdom is, it is *gentle and eaſy to be entreated*; compliant and even obſequious to all men." And how does it appear, that I am wanting in this? Why, he is " a ſevere condemner of his fellow citizens, and a ſevere exactor of conformity to his own obſervances." Now the proof. 1. " He tells us this in the very appellation he aſſumes †." Nay, I never *aſſumed* it at all. 2. But " you ſay, uſeleſs converſation is an *abomination to the Lord.* And what is this, but to withſtand St. *Paul* to the face?" Why, did St. *Paul* join in, or commend *uſeleſs converſation?* I rather think, he reproves it. He condemns as σαπρος λογος, *putrid, ſtinking* converſation, all that is not *good*, all that is not *to the uſe of edifying*, and meet to *miniſter grace to the hearers* ‡. 3. Mr. *W.* " reſolved, never to laugh, nor to ſpeak a tittle of worldly things §"—" tho' others may, nay muſt." Pray add that, with the reaſon of my ſo reſolving, namely, that I expected to die in a few days. If I expected it now, probably, I ſhould reſume the reſolution. But be it as it may, this proves nothing againſt my being both *gentle* and *eaſy to be intreated.* 4. " He ſays Mr. *G*—— was a clumſy, overgrown, hardfaced man ‖." So he was. And this was the beſt of him. I ſpare him much in ſaying no more. But he

† p. 192. ‡ Epheſ. iv. 29. § p. 193. ‖ p. 194.

he is gone. Let his aſhes reſt. 5. " I heard a moſt miſerable ſermon, full of dull, ſenſeleſs, improbable lies." It was ſo, from the beginning to the end. I have ſeldom heard the like. 6. " The perſecution at St. *Ives*" (which ended before I came ; what I ſaw I do not term *perſecution*)" was owing to the indefatigable labours of Mr. *H.* and Mr. *S.* gentlemen worthy to be had in everlaſting rembrance. † Here he tells us, it is his purpoſe to gibbet up the names of his two great perſecutors to everlaſting infamy." Theſe gentlemen had occaſioned ſeveral innocent people, to be turned out of their livelihood; and others to be outraged in the moſt ſhocking manner, and beat only not to death. My purpoſe is, by ſetting down their names, to make others afraid ſo to offend. Yet I ſay ſtill, " God forbid that I ſhould *rail*, either at a Turk, infidel or heretic." But I will bring to light the actions of ſuch Chriſtians, to be a warning to others. And all this I judge to be perfectly conſiſtent with " the ſpirit of *meekneſs* ‡."

4. " The fourth mark is, *Full of mercy and good fruits.* Let us enquire into the *mercy and good fruits* of Mr. *W.*§"

1. And firſt, " He has no mercy on his oppoſers. They paſs with him under no other title, than that of the *devil's ſervants*, and the *devil's children*‖." This is far from true. Many have oppoſed, and do oppoſe me ſtill, whom I believe to

† p. 195. ‡ p. 196. § p. 198. ‖ ibid.

to be the children and servants of God. " We have seen him dispatching the principal of these children of the devil, without mercy, to their father §." No, not one. This has been *affirmed* over and over, but never proved yet. I " fling about no exterminating judgments of God;" I " call down no fire from heaven." " But it would be for the credit of these *new saints*, to distinguish between *rage* and *zeal*." That is easily done. *Rage* is furious fire from hell; *zeal* is loving fire from heaven. 2. " If what has been said above does not suffice, turn again to Mr. *W.*'s journals. Mr. *S.* while he was speaking to the society against my brother, and me, was struck raving mad†." He was so, before an hundred witnesses; though I was *the last* to believe it. " But it seems, God is at length intreated for him, and has restored him to a sound mind." And is my *relating* this *fact*, an instance of " *dooming* men to *perdition?*" 3. " *John Haydon* cried aloud, Let the world see the judgment of God ‡." He did. But let *John Haydon* look to that. It was he said so, not I. 4. " I was informed of an *awful providence*. A poor wretch, who was here the last week, cursing and blaspheming, and labouring with all his might to hinder the word of God, had afterwards boasted, he would come again on *Sunday*, and no man should stop his mouth then. But on *Friday* God laid his hand upon him, and on *Sunday*

§ p. 199. † p. 200. ‡ p. 201.

day he was buried ‡." And was not this an awful providence? But yet I do not "doom even him to perdition." 5. "I saw a poor man, once joined with us, who wanted nothing in this world. A day or two before he hanged himself, but was cut down before he was dead. He has been crying out ever since, "God had left him, because he had left the children of God." This was *his* assertion, not *mine*. I neither affirm, nor deny it. 6. The true account of *Lucy Godshall* is this. "I buried the body of *Lucy Godshall*. After pressing toward the mark for more than two years, since she had known the pardoning love of God; she was for some time weary and faint in her mind, till I put her out of the bands. God blessed this greatly to her soul, so that in a short time she was admitted again. Soon after, being at home, she felt the love of God in an unusual manner poured into her heart. She fell down upon her knees, and delivered up her soul and body into the hands of God. In the instant the use of all her limbs was taken away, and she was in a burning fever. For three days she mightily praised God, and rejoiced in him all the day long. She then cried out, Now Satan hath desired to have me, that he may sift me as wheat. Immediately darkness and heaviness fell upon her, which continued till *Saturday* the fourth instant. On *Sunday* the light shone again upon her heart. About ten in the evening, one said to her, "Jesus

‡ p. 202.

ſus is ready to receive your ſoul. She ſaid, Amen! Amen! cloſed her and eyes, and died †." Is this brought as a proof of my *inexorableneſs!* Or of my "dooming men to perdition?"

7. "I found *Nicholas Palmer* in great weakneſs of body, and heavineſs of ſpirit. We wreſtled with God in his behalf; and our labour was not in vain. His ſoul was comforted; and a few hours after he quietly fell aſleep." A ſtrange proof this likewiſe, either of *inexorableneſs*, or of "dooming men to perdition!" Therefore this charge too ſtands totally unſupported. Here is no proof of my *unmercifulneſs* yet.

"*Good fruits* come next to be conſidered, which Mr. *Weſley*'s idea of true religion does not promiſe. He ſaith ‡," (I will repeat the words a little at large, that their true ſenſe may more clearly appear:) "in explaining thoſe words, *the kingdom of God*, or true religion, *is not meats and drinks*, I was led to ſhew, that religion does not *properly conſiſt* in harmleſſneſs, uſing the means of grace, and doing good, that is helping our neighbours, chiefly by giving alms: but that a man might both be harmleſs, uſe the means of grace, and do much good, and yet have no true religion at all." He may ſo. Yet whoever has true religion, muſt be *zealous of good works*. And zeal for all good works, is, according to *my* idea, an eſſential ingredient of true religion.

"Spiritual

† Journal iv. p. 71. ‡ p. 203.

" Spiritual cures are all the *good fruits* he pretends to †." Not quite all, says *William Kirkman*, with some others. " A few of his spiritual cures we will set in a fair light. The first time I preached at *Swalwell*," (chiefly to colliers and workers in the iron work) " none seemed to be much convinced, only *stunned*:" I mean *amazed* at what they heard, though they were the first principles of religion. " But he brings them to their senses with a vengeance." No, not *them*. These were different persons. Are they lumped together, in order to set things in a *fair light?* The whole paragraph runs thus. ‡ " I carefully examined those who had lately cried out in the congregation. Some of these, I found, could give no account at all, how or wherefore they had done so: only that of a sudden, they dropped down, they knew not how: and what they afterward said or did, they knew not. Others could just remember, they were in fear, but could not tell what they were in fear of. Several said they were afraid of the devil: and this was all they knew. But a few gave a more intelligible account of the piercing sense they then had of their sins, both inward and outward, which were set in array against them, round about: Of the dread they were in of the wrath of God, and the punishment they had deserved, into which they seemed to be just falling, without any way to escape. One of them told

† p. 204, 205. ‡ Fourth Journal, p. 82.

told me, " I was as if I was juſt falling down from the higheſt place I had ever ſeen. I thought the devil was puſhing me off, and that God had forſaken me." Another ſaid, " I felt the very fire of hell already kindled in my breaſt: and all my body was in as much pain, as if I had been in a burning fiery furnace." What wiſdom is this which rebuketh theſe, *that they ſhould hold their peace?* Nay, let ſuch an one cry after *Jeſus of Nazereth*, till he ſaith, *thy faith hath made thee whole?*"

Now follow the proofs of my driving men mad. 1. " Another of Dr. *Monro*'s patients came to aſk my advice. I found no reaſon to believe ſhe had been any otherwiſe mad, than every one is, that is *deeply convinced of ſin* §." Let this prove all that it can prove. 2. " A middle aged woman was *really diſtracted*:" Yes, before I ever ſaw her, or ſhe me. 3. " I could not but be under ſome concern with regard to one or two perſons, who were tormented in an unaccountable manner, and ſeemed to be indeed *lunatic*, as well as *ſore vexed*." True; for a time. But the deliverance of one of them is related in the very next paragraph. 4. " Two or three are *gone quite diſtracted*: that is, they mourn and *refuſe to be comforted* till they have redemption ‖." 5. " I deſired one to viſit Mrs. *G.* in *Bedlam*, put in by her huſband as a madwoman." But ſhe never was mad in any degree, as he himſelf afterwards

§ p. 208. ‖ p. 209.

terwards acknowledged. 6. "One was so deeply convinced of her ungodliness, that she cried out day and night, *Lord, save, or I perish!* All the neighbours agreed she was stark mad." But I did not make her so. For this was before she ever saw my face. Now let every one judge, whether here is yet a single proof, that I drive men mad.

"The time when this spiritual madness was at its height, he calls a *glorious time*."‡ I call that a *glorious time* when many notorious sinners are converted to God; (whether with any outward symptoms or none; for those are no way essential:) and when many are in the *triumph of faith*, greatly *rejoicing in* God their *Saviour*.

"But though Mr. *Wesley* does so well in turning fools into madmen, yet his craftsmaster is certainly one Mr. *Wheatley*, of whom he gives this extraordinary account.§

"A poor woman (on *Wed.* 17th *Sept.* 1740) said, it was four years (namely, in *Sept.* 1736, above a year before I left *Georgia*) since her son, by hearing a sermon of Mr. *Wheatley*'s, fell into great uneasiness. She thought he was ill, and would have sent for a physician. But he said, "No, no; send for Mr. *Wheatley*." He was sent for, and came; and after asking a few questions, told her, "The boy is mad. Get a coach, and carry him to Dr. *Monro*. Use my name.

‡ p. 210. § p. 211.

name. I have ſent ſeveral ſuch to him. Who this Mr. *Wheatly* is, I know not." He was lecturer at *Spittlefields* church. The event was, after the apothecary had half murdered him he was diſcharged, and the lad ſoon recovered his ſtrength. His ſenſes he never had loſt. The ſuppoſing this, was a blunder from the beginning.

" Theſe are the exploits which Mr. *W.* calls *bleſſings from* God."‖ (Certainly I do, both *repentance* and *faith*.) " And which therefore we may call the *good fruits* of his miniſtry." (May God increaſe them an hundred fold!) " What the apoſtle calls *good fruits*, namely, *doing much good*, Mr. *W.* tells us, belongs not to *true religion*." I never told any man ſo yet. I tell all men juſt the contrary.

I may then ſafely leave all mankind to judge, whether a ſingle article of the charge againſt me has yet been made good. So much for the firſt charge, that I am a *madman*. Now for the ſecond, that I am a *knave*.

5. The proof is ſhort: " Every enthuſiaſt, is a knave: but he is an enthuſiaſt. Therefore he is a knave." I deny both the firſt and ſecond propoſition. Nay, the firſt is proved thus. " Enthuſiaſm muſt always be accompanied with craft and knavery."¶ It *often* is ſo, but not *always*; for there may be *honeſt enthuſiaſts*. Therefore the whole account of that *odd combination* which

‖ p. 212. ¶ p. 213.

which follows† is ingenious, but proves nothing.

Yet I muſt touch upon one or two parts of it. "An enthuſiaſt thinks he is diſpenſed with in breaking, nay, that he is authorized to break, the common laws of morality." Does every enthuſiaſt? Then I am none: for I never thought any ſuch thing. I believe no man living is authorized to break, or diſpenſed with in breaking any law of morality. I know, whoever (habitually) breaks one of the leaſt of theſe, *ſhall be called leaſt in the kingdom of heaven.*

"Can any but an enthuſiaſt believe, that he may uſe guile to promote the glory of God?" Yes, ten thouſand that are no enthuſiaſts, firmly believe this. How few do we find that do not believe it? That do not plead for *officious lies?* How few will ſubſcribe to St. *Auguſtine*'s declaration (to which I aſſent with my whole heart) "I would not tell a wilful lie, to ſave the ſouls of the whole world."

But to return. "*The wiſdom from above is without partiality and without hypocriſy. Partiality* conſiſts in diſpenſing an unequal meaſure in our tranſactions with others: *hypocriſy*, in attempting to cover that unequal meaſure by prevarication and falſe pretences."

The former of theſe definitions is not clear; the latter, neither clear, nor adequate to the defined.

† p. 214—218.

But let this paſs. My partiality is now the point. What are the proofs of it? 1. "His followers are always the *children of* God, his oppoſers the *children of the devil* †." Neither ſo, nor ſo, I never affirmed either one or the other univerſally. That ſome of the former are children of God, and ſome of the latter children of the devil, I believe. But what will this prove?

"His followers are directed by *inward feelings*, the *impulſes* of an inflamed fancy:" (no more than they are directed by the *Alcoran*) "his oppoſers, by the ſcripture." What while they are curſing, ſwearing, blaſpheming; beating and maiming men that have done them no wrong, and treating women in a manner too ſhocking to be repeated? 2. The next proof is very extraordinary. My words are, "I was with two perſons, who I doubt, are properly enthuſiaſts: for firſt, they think to attain the end without the means, which is enthuſiaſm properly ſo called. Again, they think themſelves inſpired of God, and are not. But falſe, imaginary inſpiration is enthuſiaſm. That theirs is only imaginary inſpiration appears hence, it contradicts *the law and the teſtimony* ‡."

Now, by what art of man can this be made a proof of my *partiality*? Why thus: "Theſe are wiſe words. But what do they amount to? Only to this: that theſe two perſons would not take out their patents of inſpiration from his office."

† p. 220. ‡ p. 221.

office." But what proof is there of this round aſſertion? Truly, none at all.

Full as extraordinary is the third proof of my *partiality*. "Miſs *Gr*—— told Mrs. *Sp*—, Mr. *Weſley* was a papiſt. Upon this Miſs *Gr*. is anathematized. And we are told, that *in conſequence*, ſhe had lately been *raving mad* and as ſuch was *tied down* in her bed. Yet *all theſe* circumſtances of madneſs have befallen his favourite ſaints, whom he has vindicated from the opprobrium†."

The paſſage in my journal ſtands thus. "Mrs. *Spa*— told me, two or three nights ſince, Miſs *Gr*. met me, and ſaid, I aſſure you, Mr. *Weſley* is a papiſt. Perhaps I need obſerve no more upon this, than that Miſs *Gr*. had lately been raving mad, in conſequence of a *fever*; (not of an *anathema* which never had any being) that as ſuch ſhe was tied down in her bed; and as ſoon as ſhe was ſuffered to go abroad, went to Mr. *Whitefield*, to inquire of him, whether *ſhe* was not a papiſt? But he quickly perceived, ſhe was only a luntic, the nature of her diſorder ſoon betraying itſelf." Certainly then my allowing *her* to be mad is no proof of my partiality. I will allow every one to be ſo, who is attended with "*all theſe* circumſtances of madneſs."

4. "He pronounces ſentence of enthuſiaſm upon another, and tells us wherefore, without any diſguiſe. Here I took leave of a poor *mad*, *original* enthuſiaſt, who had been ſcattering lies

† p. 222.

in every quarter." It was the famous *John Adams*, ſince confined at *Box*, whoſe capital lie, the ſource of the reſt was, that he was a prophet, greater than *Moſes*, or any of the apoſtles. And is the pronouncing him a madman, a proof of my *partiality?*

5. " I had much converſation with Mr. *Simpſon*, an *original enthuſiaſt*. I deſire d him in the evening to give an exhortaion. He did ſo, and ſpoke many good things, in a manner peculiar to himſelf," (without order or connexion, head or tail; and in a language very near as myſtical as that of *Jacob Behmen*.) " When he had done, I ſummed up what he had ſaid, methodizing and explaining it. O what pity it is, this well-meaning man ſhould ever ſpeak without an interpreter †!"

Let this paſſage likewiſe ſtand as it is, and who can gueſs how it is to prove my *partiality?* But by a ſlight of hand, the thing is done. " How differently does Mr. *Weſley* treat theſe two enthuſiaſts? The firſt is accuſed of ſpreading lies *of his maſter*:" (No, he never was any diſciple of mine.) " On which Mr. *W. took his leave of him*; a gentle expreſſion, to ſignify the thruſting him out head and ſhoulders, from the ſociety of ſaints." It ſignifies neither more nor leſs, than that I went out of the room and left him. " The other's enthuſiaſm is made to conſiſt only in *want* of *method*." No. His enthuſiaſm

† p. 323.

ſiaſm did not *conſiſt in this.* It was the cauſe of it. But he was quite another man than *John Adams*; and I believe, a right honeſt man.

6. "I was both ſurprized and grieved at a genuine inſtance of enthuſiaſm. *I. B.* who had received a ſenſe of the love of God a few days before, came riding though the town, hollowing and ſhouting and driving all the people before him, telling them, "God had told him, he ſhould be a king, and ſhould tread all his enemies under his feet." I ſent him home immediately to his work, and adviſed him to cry day and night to God that he might be lowly in heart, leſt Satan ſhould again *get an advantage over him.*"

What this proves, or is intended to prove, I cannot tell. Certainly, neither this, nor any of the preceding paſſages, prove the point now in queſtion, my *partiality.* So this likewiſe is wholly unproved ſtill.

"We ſhall end, where every ſantic leader ends, with his *hypocriſy* †." Five arguments are brought in proof of this. I ſhall take them in their order. 1. "After having heaped up miracles one upon another, he ſneaks away under the protection of a puny wonder. About five I began near the Keelmen's hoſpital many thouſands ſtanding round. The wind was high juſt before, but ſcarce a breath was felt all the time we aſſembled before God. I praiſe God for this

† p. 227.

alſo. Is it enthuſiaſm, *to ſee God in every benefit we receive?* It is not; the enthuſiaſm conſiſts in believing thoſe benefits to be conferred, through a change in the eſtabliſhed courſe of nature. But here he *inſinuates*, that he meant no more by his *miracles*, then the ſeeing God in every benefit we receive †." That ſudden and total ceaſing of the wind, I impute to the *particular providence of God.* This I mean by *ſeeing God* therein. But this I knew many would count *enthuſiaſm.* In guarding againſt it, I had an eye to that ſingle incident, and no other. Nor did I *inſinuate* any thing more than I expreſſed, in as plain a manner as I could.

A little digreſſion follows. " A friend of his adviſes, not to eſtabliſh the power of working miracles, as the great criterion of a divine miſſion: ſeeing the agreement of doctrines with ſcripture, is the only infallible rule‡." " But Chriſt himſelf eſtabliſhes the power of working miracles, as the great criterion of a divine miſſion§." True, of a miſſion to be the Saviour of the world: to put a period to the *Jewiſh*, and introduce the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation. And whoever pretends to *ſuch a miſſion* will ſtand in ſuch need of *ſuch credentials.*

2. " He ſhifts and doubles no leſs" (neither leſs, nor more) " as to the extaſies of his ſaints. Sometimes they are of God, ſometimes of the devil; but he is conſtant in this, that *natural cauſes*

† p. 228, 229. ‡ p. 230. § p. 231.

cauſes have *no hand* in them." This is not true, In what are here termed *extaſies*, ſtrong joy or grief, attended with various bodily ſymptoms, I have openly affirmed again and again, that *natural cauſes* have a part. Nor did I ever ſhift or double on the head. I have ſteadily and uniformly maintained, that if the mind be affected to ſuch a degree, the body muſt be affected by the laws of the vital union. The mind I believe was, in many of thoſe caſes, affected by the Spirit of God, in others by the devil, and in ſome by both: and in conſequence of this, the body was affected alſo. 3. "Mr. *W.* ſays, I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous God, by queſtioning his work, and by blaſpheming it, by imputing it to nature, or even to the devil†." True; by imputing the conviction and converſion of ſinners, which is the work of God alone, (becauſe of theſe unuſual circumſtances attending it) either to nature or to the devil. This is flat and plain. No *prevarication* yet. Let us attend to the next proof of it. "Innumerable cautions were given me, not to regard viſions or dreams, or to fancy people had remiſſion of ſins, becauſe of their cries, or tears, or outward profeſſions. The ſum of my anſwer was, you deny that God does now work theſe effects; at leaſt, that he works them in this manner. I affirm both.—I have ſeen very many perſons changed in a moment from a ſpirit of fear, horror, deſpair, to a

† p. 232, 233.

ſpirit of love, joy, peace—What I have to ſay touching viſions and dreams is this. I know ſeveral perſons in whom this great change was wrought in a dream, or during a ſtrong repreſentation to the eye of their mind, of Chriſt either on the croſs, or in glory. This is the fact. Let any judge of it as they pleaſe. And that ſuch a change was then wrought, appears (not from their ſhedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out: theſe are not the fruits, as you ſeem to ſuppoſe, whereby I judge, but) from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked, from that time holy and juſt and good." "Nay, he is ſo convinced of its being the *work of God*, that the *horrid blaſphemies* which enſued, he aſcribes to the abundance of joy which God had given to a poor, mad woman†." Do I aſcribe thoſe *blaſphemies* to her *joy in God?* No; but to her *pride*. My words are. "I met with one, who having been *lifted up* with the abundance of joy which God had given her, had fallen into ſuch blaſphemies and vain imaginations, as are not common to men. In the afternoon I found another inſtance, nearly I fear of the ſame kind: one who ſet her *private revelations*, ſo called, on the ſelf-ſame foot with the written word‡."

But how is this to prove *prevarication?* "Why, on a ſudden, he *directly revokes* all he had advanced. He ſays, "I told them, they were not to judge of the Spirit whereby any one ſpoke, either

† p. 234. ‡ p. 235.

ther by *appearances*, or by *common report*, or by their own *inward feelings*. No, nor by any *dreams*, *visions*, or *revelations*, supposed to be made to the soul, any more than by their tears, or any *involuntary effects* wrought upon their bodies. I warned them, that all these things were in themselves of a *doubtful*, *disputable* nature. They *might* be from God, or they *might not*; and were therefore not simply to be relied on, any more than simply to be condemned, but to be tried by a farther rule, to be brought to the only certain test, *the law and the testimony*." "Now is not this a *formal recantation* of what he had said just above†?" Nothing less, as I will shew in two minutes, to every calm, impartial man. What I say now, I have said any time this thirty years: I have never varied therefrom for an hour. "Every thing *disputable* is to be brought to the *only certain test*, *the law and the testimony*." "But did not you talk just now of *visions* and *dreams*?" Yes; but not as of a *test* of any thing; unless only as a *channel* thro' which God is sometimes pleased to convey *love*, *joy*, *peace*, *long-suffering*, *gentleness*, *goodness*, *fidelity*, *meekness*, *temperance*, the indisputable *fruit* of his Spirit. And these we may observe, wherever they exist, must be *inwardly felt*. Now where is the *prevarication*? Where the *formal recantation*? They are vanished into air.

But here is more proof: "At length he gives

† p. 335.

up all these *divine agitations* to the devil †. I enquired, says he, into the case of those who had lately cried out aloud during the preaching. I found this had come upon every one of them in a moment, without any previous notice. In that moment they dropt down, lost all their strength, and were seized with violent pain. Some said they felt as if a sword were running through them: others as if their whole body was tearing in pieces. *These symptoms* I can no more impute to any *natural cause*, than to the Spirit of God. I make no doubt but it was *Satan tearing them* as they were coming to Christ ‡."

" Now these were the *very symptoms* which he had before ascribed to the Spirit of God." Never in my life. Indeed some of them I never met with before. Those outward *symptoms* which I had met with before, bodily agitations in particular, I did not ascribe to the Spirit of God, but to the *natural union* of the soul and body. And those symptoms which I now ascribe to the devil, I never ascribed to any other cause. The second proof of my *prevarication* or *hypocrisy* is therefore just as conclusive as the first.

3. Now for the third. " Mr. *W.* before spoke contemptuously of *orthodoxy*, to take in the sectaries. But when he would take off churchmen, then orthodoxy is the *unum necessarium*." Did I ever say so? No more than (in the other extreme)

† p. 236. ‡ p. 237.

treme) *ſpeak contemptuouſly* of it. " Yes, you ſay, I deſcribed the *plain, old* religion of the church of *England*, which is now almoſt every where ſpoken againſt, under the *new* name of *Methodiſt*." Very well: and what ſhadow of *prevarication* is here? May I not ſtill declare the *plain, old religion* of the church of *England*, and yet very conſiſtently aver, that *right opinion* is a very ſlender part of it?

4. The next paſſage, I am ſorry to ſay, is neither related with ſerioufneſs nor truth. " We have ſeen him *inviting* perſecution." Never: though I " *rejoiced*" in the inſtance alledged, at having an opportunity of calling a multitude of the moſt abandoned ſinners to repentance.

What is peculiarly unfair is, the lame, falſe account is palmed upon *me*, by " ſo he himſelf tells the ſtory." I muſt therefore tell the ſtory once more, in as few words as I can.

Sunday, Aug. 7, 1737, I repelled Mrs. *W.* from the communion. *Tueſday* 9, I was required by Mr. Bailiff *Parker* to appear at the next court. *Thurſ.* 11, Mr. *Cauſton*, her uncle, ſaid to me, " Give your reaſons for repelling her before the whole congregation." I anſwered; " Sir, if you inſiſt upon it, I will." But I heard no more of it. Afterward he ſaid (but not to *me*) " Mr. *W.* had repelled *Sophy* out of revenge, becauſe he had made propoſals of marriage to her which ſhe rejected." *Tueſday* 16, Mrs. *W.* made affidavit of it. *Thurſday, Sept.* 1, a grand

jury, *prepared* by Mr. *Cauſton*, found, that "*John Weſley* had broken the laws of the realm, by ſpeaking and writing to Mrs. *W.* againſt her huſband's conſent, and by repelling her from the communion."

Friday 2, was the third court day at which I appeared ſince my being required ſo to do by Mr. *Parker*. I moved for an immediate hearing; but was put off till the next court day. On the next court day I appeared again, as alſo at the two courts following; but could not be heard. *Thurſ. Nov.* 3, I appeared in court again; and yet again on *Tueſ. Nov.* 22, on which day Mr. *C.* deſired to ſpeak with me, and read me an affidavit, in which it was affirmed, that I "abuſed Mr. *C.* in his own houſe, calling him liar, villain, and ſo on." It was likewiſe repeated, that I had been reprimanded at the laſt court, by Mr. *C.* as an enemy to and hinderer of the public peace.

"My friends agreed with me, that the time we looked for, was now come. And the next morning, calling on Mr. *C.* I told him, "I deſigned to ſet out for *England* immediately."

Friday, Decem. 2, I propoſed to ſet out for *Carolina* about noon. But about ten, the magiſtrates ſent for me, and told me, "I muſt not go out of the province; for I had not anſwered the allegations laid againſt me." I replied, "I have appeared at ſix or ſeven courts, in order to anſwer them. But I was not ſuffered ſo to do." After a few

a few more words, I ſaid, " You uſe me very ill. And ſo you do the truſtees. You know your buſineſs, and I know mine."

In the afternoon, they publiſhed an order, forbidding any to aſſiſt me in going out of the province. But I knew, I had no more buſineſs there. So ſoon as evening prayer was over, the tide then ſerving, I took boat at the Bluff for *Carolina*.

This is the plain account of the matter. I need only add a remark or two on the pleaſantry of my cenſurer. " He had recourſe as uſual, to his *revelations*. I conſulted my friends, whether God *did not call* me to England†." Not by *revelations*: theſe were out of the queſtion; but by clear, ſtrong reaſons. " The magiſtrate ſoon quickened his pace, by declaring him an enemy to the public peace." No; that ſenſeleſs aſſertion of Mr. *C.* made me go neither ſooner nor later. " The reader has ſeen him long *languiſh* for perſecution." What, before *November* 1737? I never *languiſhed* for it either before or ſince. But I *ſubmit* to what pleaſes God. " To hide his *poltronery* in a bravado, he gave public notice of his apoſtolical intention ‡." Kind and civil! I may be excuſed from taking notice of what follows. It is equally ſerious and genteel.

" Had his *longings* for perſecution been without *hypocriſy*." The ſame miſtake throughout. I never longed or *profeſſed* to long for it at all.

But

† p. 242. ‡ p. 243.

But if I had *profeſſed* it ever *ſince* I returned from *Georgia*, what was done *before* I returned could not prove *that profeſſion* to be *hypocriſy*. So all this ribaldry ſerves no end; only to throw *much dirt*, if haply ſome may ſtick.

Meantime, how many untruths are here in one page †? 1. "He made the path doubly perplexed for his followers. 2. He *left them to anſwer* for his crimes. 3. He *longed* for perſecution. 4. He went as far as *Georgia for it*. 5. The truth of his miſſion was *queſtioned by the magiſtrate*, and 6. *decried by the people*, 7. for his *falſe morals*. 8. The *goſpel was wounded* through the ſides of its *pretended miſſionary*. 9. The firſt Chriſtian preachers offered up themſelves: (ſo did I.) Inſtead of this, our *paltry mimic*"—*Bona verba!* Surely a writer ſhould *reverence himſelf*, how much ſoever he *deſpiſes* his opponent. So upon the whole, this proof of my *hypocriſy* is as lame as the three former.

5. "We have ſeen above, how he ſets all *prudence* at defiance." None but *falſe prudence*. "But he uſes a different language when his rivals are to be reſtrained." No: always the ſame, both with regard to *falſe prudence* and *true*.

"But take the affair from the beginning. He began to ſuſpect rivals in the year thirty-nine: for he ſays, "Remembering how many that came after me were preferred before me." The very next words ſhew in what ſenſe. They *had attained*

† p. 244.

tained unto the law of righteouſneſs: I had not. But what has this to do with *rivals?*

However, go on. "At *this time* (*Dec.* 8, 1739) his opening the bible afforded him but ſmall relief. He ſunk ſo far in his deſpondency, as to doubt if God would not lay him aſide, and ſend other labourers into his harveſt." But this was *another time.* It was *June* 22. And the occaſion of the doubt is expreſly mentioned. "I preached, but had no life or ſpirit in me, and was much in doubt," on *that account.* Not on account of Mr. *Whitefield.* He did not "*now* begin to ſet up for himſelf." We were in full union; nor was there the leaſt ſhadow of *rivalry* or contention between us. I ſtill ſincerely "praiſe God for his wiſdom, in giving different talents to different preachers †," and particularly for his giving Mr. *Wh.* the talents which I have not.

6. What farther proof of *hypocriſy?* Why, "he had given innumerable flirts of contempt in his Journals *againſt human learning* ‡." Where? I do not know. Let the paſſages be cited: elſe let me ſpeak *for it* ever ſo much, it will prove nothing. "At laſt he was forced to have recourſe to what he had ſo much ſcorned, I mean, *prudence* §." All a miſtake. I hope never to have recourſe to *falſe prudence:* and *true prudence* I never ſcorned.

"He might have met Mr. *Wh.* half way: but he was too formidable a *rival* ‖. With a leſs formidable

† p. 250. ‡ p. 252, 253. § p. 255. ‖ ibid.

formidable one he purſues this way. I laboured ſays he, to convince Mr. *Gr.*" (my aſſiſtant, not *rival*) " that he had not done well, in confuting, as he termed it, the ſermon I preached the *Sunday* before. I aſked, will you meet me half way? (the words following put my meaning beyond all diſpute.) I will never publicly *preach againſt you*. Will not you, againſt *me?* Here we ſee a fair invitation to Mr. *Gr.* to play the hypocrite with him." Not in the leaſt. Each might ſimply deliver his own ſentiments, without *preaching againſt* the other. " We conclude that Mr. *Weſley*, amidſt his warmeſt exclamations againſt *all prudence*, had ſtill a ſuccedaneum, which *he* indeed *calls prudence*. But its true name is *craft*."†

* *Craft* is an eſſential part of *worldly prudence*. This I deteſt and abhor. And let him prove it upon me that can. But it muſt be by better arguments then the foregoing. *Truly Chriſtian prudence*, ſuch as was recommended by our Lord, and practiſed by him and his apoſtles, I reverence and deſire to learn, being convinced of its abundant uſefulneſs.

I know nothing material in the argument which I have left untouched. And I muſt now refer it to all the world, whether, for all that has been brought to the contrary, I may not ſtill have a meaſure of the *wiſdom from above, which is firſt pure, then peaceable; gentle, eaſy to be intreated; full*

† p. 257.

full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy.

I have spoke abundantly more concerning myself than I intended or expected. Yet I must beg leave to add a few words more. How far I am from being an enemy to *prudence*, I hope appears already. It remains to enquire, whether I am an enemy to *reason* or *natural religion?*

"As to the first, he frankly tells us, The father of *lies* was the father of *reasonings* also. For he says, I observed more and more the advantage *Satan* had gained over us. Many were thrown into *idle reasonings*."‡ Yes, and they were hurt thereby. But *reason* is good, though *idle reasonings* are evil. Nor does it follow, that I am an enemy to the one, because I condemn the other.

"However you are an enemy to *natural religion*. For you say, A *Frenchman* gave us a full account of the *Chicasaws*. They do nothing but eat, and drink, and smoak, from morning till night, and almost from night till morning. For they rise at any hour of the night when they awake, and after eating and drinking as much as they can, go to sleep again. Hence we could not but remark, what is *the religion of nature*, properly so called, or that religion which flows from *natural reason*, unassisted by *revelation*."† I believe this dispute may be cut short by only defining the term. What does your lordship mean

‡ p. 289. † p. 290.

mean by *natural religion?* A *ſyſtem of principles?* But I mean by it, in this place, *mens natural manners.* Theſe certainly "flow from their *natural paſſions and appetites*," with that degree of *reaſon* which they have. And this, in other inſtances, is not contemptible; though it is not ſufficient to teach them true religion.

II. I proceed to conſider, in the ſecond place, what is advanced concerning the operations of the Holy Spirit.

"Our bleſſed Redeemer promiſed to ſend among his followers the Holy Ghoſt, called *the Spirit of Truth and the Comforter*, which ſhould co-operate with man, in *eſtabliſhing his faith* and in *perfecting his obedience*; or in other words, ſhould *ſanctify him to redemption.*"‡

Accordingly, "the *ſanctification* and *redemption* of the world, man cannot fruſtrate nor render ineffectual. For it is not in his power to make that to be undone, which is *once done and perfected.*"§

I do not comprehend. Is *all* the world *ſanctified?* Is not to be *ſanctified* the ſame as to be *made holy?* Is *all* the world *holy?* And "can no man fruſtrate" his own *ſanctification?*"

"The Holy Ghoſt eſtabliſhes our faith and perfects our obedience, by *inlightning the underſtanding*, and *rectifying the will.*"‖

"In the former reſpect, 1. He gave *the gift of tongues* at the day of *Pentecoſt.*"

"Indeed

‡ p. 3. § p. 337. ‖ p. 3.

" Indeed *enthuſiaſts* in their extaſies have *talked very fluently* in languages they had a very imperfect knowledge of in their ſober intervals." I can no more believe this on the credit of Lord *Shafteſbury* and a *Popiſh* exorciſt, than I can believe the tale of " an hundred people *talking without tongues*," on the credit of Dr. *Middleton*.

" The other gifts of the Spirit St. *Paul* reckons up thus. *To one is given the word of wiſdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another the gifts of healing, to another working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the diſcerning of ſpirits.*"¶ But why are the other three left out? *Faith, divers kinds of tongues*, and the *interpretation of tongues?*

I believe the *word of wiſdom* means, light to explain the manifold wiſdom of God in the grand ſcheme of goſpel-ſalvation; the *word of knowledge*, a power of explaining the Old Teſtament types and prophecies. *Faith* may mean an extraordinary truſt in God, under the moſt difficult and dangerous circumſtances: *the gifts of healing*, a miraculous power of curing diſeaſes: *the diſcerning of ſpirits*, a ſupernatural diſcernment, whether men were upright or not? Whether they were qualified for offices in the church? And whether they who profeſt to ſpeak by inſpiration, really did ſo or not?

But " the richeſt of the fruits of the Spirit is the

¶ p. 23.

the *inſpiration of ſcripture.*"† Herein the promiſe, that *the Comforter* ſhould *abide with us for ever*, is eminently fulfilled. For though his ordinary influence *occaſionally* aſſiſts the faithful of all ages, yet his *conſtant* abode and *ſupreme illumination* is in the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament.‡ I mean, he is *there only* as the *illuminator of the underſtanding.*"

But does this agree with the following words? "Nature is not able to keep a mean. But *grace* is able: for *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities.* We muſt apply to the *guide of truth*, to prevent our being *carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines*†." Is he not then *every where* to *illuminate the underſtanding*, as well as to *rectify the will?* And indeed, do we not need the one, as continually as the other?

"But how did he inſpire the ſcripture? He ſo directed the writers, that *no conſiderable error* ſhould fall from them§." Nay, will not the allowing, there is *any error* in ſcripture, ſhake the authority of the whole?

Again, what is the difference between the *immediate* and the *virtual* influence of the Holy Spirit? I know, *Milton* ſpeaks of "*virtual* or *immediate* touch." But moſt incline to think, *virtual touch* is no touch at all.

"Were the ſtyle of the New Teſtament *utterly rude and barbarous*, and *abounding with every fault*

† p. 30. ‡ p. 39. † p. 340. § p. 45.

fault that can poſſibly deform a language: this is ſo far from proving ſuch language not divinely inſpired, that it is one certain mark of this original‡."

A vehement paradox this. But it is not proved yet, and probably never will.

" The labours of thoſe who have attempted to defend the purity of ſcripture-greek, have been very idly employed‖."

Others think, they have been very wiſely employed, and that they have abundantly proved their point.

Having now " conſidered the operations of the Holy Spirit, as the *guide of truth*, who clears and enlightens the underſtanding, I proceed to conſider him as *the Comforter*, who purifies and ſupports the will.†"

" Sacred antiquity is full in its accounts of the *ſudden* and *entire* change made by the Holy Spirit in the diſpoſitions and manners of thoſe whom it had inlightened: inſtantaneouſly effacing their evil habits, and familiarizing them to the performance of every good action§."

" No natural cauſe could effect this. Neither *fanaticiſm* nor *ſuperſtition*, nor both of them, will account for ſo *ſudden* and *laſting* a converſion."

" *Superſtition* never effects any conſiderable change in the *manners*. Its utmoſt force is juſt enough, to make us exact in the ceremonious offices

‡ p. 55. ‖ p. 66. † p. 89. § p. 90.

fices of religion, or to cauſe ſome acts of penitence, as death approaches‡."

" *Fanaticiſm* indeed acts with greater violence, and by influencing the will, frequently forces the manners from their bent, and ſometimes effaces the ſtrongeſt impreſſions of cuſtom and nature. But this fervor, though violent, is rarely *laſting:* never ſo long, as to eſtabliſh the *new ſyſtem* into an *habit.* So that when its rage ſubſides, as it very ſoon does, (but where it drives into downright madneſs) the bias on the will keeps abating, till all the former habitudes recover their relaxed tone§."

Never were reflections more juſt than theſe. And whoever applies them to the matters of fact, which daily occur all over *England*, and particularly in *London*, will eaſily diſcern, that the changes now wrought, cannot be accounted for by *natural cauſes*; not by *ſuperſtition*; for the *manners* are changed; the whole life and converſation: not by *fanaticiſm*; for theſe changes are ſo " laſting, as to eſtabliſh the *new ſyſtem* into a *habit*:" not by mere *reaſon*: for they are *ſudden*; therefore they can only be wrought by the Holy Spirit.

As to *Savanarola*'s being a fanatic, or aſſuming the perſon of a prophet, I cannot take a *popiſh* hiſtorian's word. And what a man ſays on the rack proves nothing: no more than his dying

† p. 90. ‡ p. 91. § p. 92.

dying ſilent. Probably this might ariſe from ſhame and conſciouſneſs of having accuſed himſelf falſely under the torture.

" But how does the ſpirit as comforter *abide with us for ever?* He *abides with the church for ever*, as well *perſonally* in his office *of comforter*, *as virtually* in his office of *enlightener* †."

Does he not then abide with the church *perſonally*, in both theſe reſpects? What is meant by *abiding virtually?* And what is the difference between *abiding virtually*, and *abiding perſonally?*

" The queſtion will be, Does he ſtill exerciſe his office, *in the ſame extraordinary manner* as in the apoſtles days ‡."

I know none that affirms it. " St. *Paul* has determined this queſtion. *Charity*, ſays he, *never faileth. But whether there be prophecies, they ſhall fail, whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe, whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away* §."

The common opinion is, that this reſpects another life, as he inforces his argument by this obſervation, *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly: but then face to face. Now we know in part: but then ſhall we know, even as alſo we are known*‡.

" But the apoſtle means, charity is to accompany the church in *all its ſtages*: whereas *prophecy* and all the reſt are only beſtowed *during its infant ſtate*, to ſupport it againſt the deluſions and powers of darkneſs ‖."

" The

† p. 96. ‡ p. 97. § 1 Cor. xiii. 8, &c. ‡ p. 99. ‖ p. 100.

" The *Corinthians* abounded in theſe *gifts*, but were wanting in *charity*. And this the apoſtle here expoſes by proving charity to be ſuperior to them all, both in its *qualities* and *duration*. The three firſt verſes declare that the other gifts are uſeleſs without charity. The next four ſpecify the qualities of charity; the remaining ſix declare its continuance †. *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they ſhall fail, whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe, whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away.* In the next verſe he gives the reaſon. *For we know in part, and we propheſy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away*: i. e. when that *Chriſtian life*, the lines of which are marked out by the goſpel, ſhall arrive to its *full vigor and maturity*; then the temporary aids, given to ſubdue prejudice, and to ſupport the weak, ſhall, like ſcaffolding, be removed." In other words, when that *Chriſtian life*, wherein the apoſtles and firſt *Chriſtians* were but *infants*, ſhall arrive to its *full vigor* and *maturity* in their ſucceſſors, then miracles ſhall ceaſe." But I fear that time is not yet come. I doubt none that are now alive, enjoy more of *vigor and maturity* of the Chriſtian life, than the very firſt Chriſtians did.

" To ſhew that the loſs of theſe will not be regretted, when the church has advanced from a ſtate of *infancy* to *manhood*," (alas the day!

Were

† p. 102.

Were the *apoſtles* but *infants* to *us?*) " he illuſtrates the caſe by an elegant ſimilitude. *When I was a child I ſpake as a child——but when I became a man, I put away childiſh things.* His next remark, concerning the defects of human knowledge, is only an occaſional anſwer to an objection. And the laſt verſe ſhews, that the ſuperior duration of charity refers to the preſent life only. *Now abideth faith, hope, charity, theſe three: but the greateſt of theſe is charity.* That is, you may perhaps object, faith and hope will likewiſe remain in the church, when prophecy, tongues and knowledge are ceaſed; they will ſo; but ſtill charity is the greateſt, becauſe of its excellent qualities†."

" The laſt verſe ſhews!" Is not this begging the queſtion? How *forced* is all this? The plain natural meaning of the paſſage is, *love* (the abſolute neceſſity, and the nature of which is ſhewn in the foregoing verſes) has another commendation, *it never faileth*; it accompanies and adorns us to eternity. *But whether there be prophecies, they ſhall fail*, when all things are fulfilled, and God is all in all: *whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe.* One language ſhall prevail among all the inhabitants of heaven, while the low, imperfect languages of earth are forgotten. The *knowledge* likewiſe we now ſo eagerly purſue, *ſhall* then *vaniſh away*. As ſtar-light is loſt in that of the mid-day ſun, ſo our preſent knowledge

† p. 107.

in the light of eternity. *For we know in part, and we propheſy in part.* We have here but ſhort, narrow, imperfect conceptions, even of the things round about us, and much more of the deep things of God. And even the prophecies which men deliver from God, are far from taking in the whole of future events. *But when that which is perfect is come*, at death, and in the laſt day, *that which is in part ſhall be done away.* Both that low, imperfect, glimmering light, which is all the knowledge we can now attain to: and theſe ſlow and unſatisfactory methods of attaining, as well as of imparting it to others. *When I was a child, I talked as a child, I underſtood as a child, I reaſoned as a child.* As if he had ſaid, In our preſent ſtate, we are mere infants, compared to what we ſhall be hereafter: *but when I became a man, I put away childiſh things:* and a proportionable change ſhall we all find, when we launch into eternity. *Now we ſee*, even the things which ſurround us, *by means of a glaſs* or *mirror*, in a dim, faint, obſcure manner, ſo that every thing is a kind of *riddle* to us: but then we *ſhall ſee*, not a faint reflection, but the objects themſelves, *face to face*, directly and diſtinctly. *Now I know but in part.* Even when God reveals things to me, great part of them is ſtill kept under the veil: *but then ſhall I know, even as I alſo am known:* in a clear, full, comprehenſive manner, in ſome meaſure like God, who penetrates the center of every object, and ſees at one

glance

glance through my soul, and all things. *And now*, during the present life, *abide these three, faith, hope, love: but the greatest of these*, in its duration, as well as the excellence of its nature, is *love*. Faith, hope, love, are the sum of perfection on earth: love alone is the sum of perfection in heaven.

"It appears then, that the miraculous powers of the church, *were to cease upon its perfect establishment*†." Nothing like it appears from this scripture. But supposing it did, is Christianity *perfectly established* yet? Even nominal Christianity? Mr. *Brerewood* took large pains to be fully informed. And, according to his account, five parts in six of the known world, are Mahometans or Pagans to this day. If so, Christianity is yet far from being *perfectly established*, either in *Europe*, *Asia*, *Africa*, or *America*.

"Having now established the fact, (wonderfully established!) we may enquire the *fitness* of it. There were two causes of the extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit, one to manifest his mission, (and this was done once for all) the other to comfort and instruct the church ‡."

"At his first descent on the apostles, he found their minds rude and uninformed, strangers to all heavenly knowledge, and utterly averse to the gospel. He illuminated their minds with all necessary truth. For *a rule of faith* not being yet composed," (No! Had they not *the*

† p. 107. ‡ p. 110.

law and the prophets ?) " ſome *extraordinary infuſion* of his virtue was ſtill neceſſeary. But when this rule was perfected, *part of this office was transferred upon the ſacred canon:* and his inlightning grace was not to be expected in ſuch abundant meaſure, as to make the recipients *infallible guides* †."

Certainly it was not. If this is all that is intended, no one will gainſay.

" Yet modern *fanatics* pretend to *as high a degree* of divine communications, as if no ſuch rule were in being :" (I do not:) " or at leaſt, as if that rule, needed the *further aſſiſtance* of the Holy Spirit to explain his own meaning." This is quite another thing. I do firmly believe, (and what ſerious man does not ?) *Omnis ſcriptura legi debet eo ſpiritu quo ſcripta eſt*: we need the ſame Spirit to *underſtand* the ſcripture, which enabled the holy men of old to write it.

" Again, the whole ſtrength of human *prejudices* was then ſet in oppoſition to the goſpel to overcome the obſtinacy and violence of which, nothing leſs than the power of the Holy One was ſufficient ‡." At preſent, whatever *prejudices* may remain, it *draws the other way.*" What, toward holineſs ? Toward temperance and chaſtity ? Toward juſtice, mercy, and truth ? Quite the reverſe. And to overcome the obſtinacy and violence of the heart-prejudices which ſtill lie againſt theſe, the power of the Holy One is

† p. 112. ‡ p. 113.

is as neceſſary now, as ever it was from the beginning of the world.

" A further reaſon for the ceaſing of miracles is, the peace and ſecurity of the church. The *profeſſion* of the Chriſtian faith, is now attended with eaſe and *honour*." " The *profeſſion*:" true: but not the *thing* itſelf: as *all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus* experience.

" But if miracles are not ceaſed, why do you not prove your miſſion thereby?" As your Lordſhip has frequently ſpoke to this effect, I will now give a clear anſwer. And I purpoſely do it, in the ſame words, which I publiſhed many years ſince.

1. " I have in ſome meaſure explained myſelf on the head of miracles, in the third part of the *Father Appeal*. But ſince you repeat the demand, (though without taking any notice of the arguments there advanced) I will endeavour once more to give you a diſtinct, full, and determinate anſwer. And 1. I acknowledge that I have ſeen with my eyes, and heard with my ears, ſeveral things, which, to the beſt of my judgment, cannot be accounted for, by the *ordinary* courſe of *natural cauſes*, and which, I therefore believe, ought to be *aſcribed to the extraordinary interpoſition of God*. If any man chuſe to ſtile theſe miracles, I reclaim not. I have weighed the preceding and following circumſtances. I have ſtrove to account for them

in a *natural* way; but could not, without doing violence to my reaſon. Not to go far back, I am clearly perſuaded, that the ſudden deliverance of *John Haydon* was one inſtance of of this kind, and my own recovery on *May* the 10th, another. I cannot account for either of theſe in a *natural* way. Therefore I believe they were both *ſupernatural*.

I Muſt, ſecondly, obſerve, that the truth of theſe facts is ſupported by the ſame kind of proof as that of all other facts is wont to be, namely, the teſtimony of competent witneſſes. And that the teſtimony here, is in as high a degree as any reaſonable man can deſire. Thoſe witneſſes were many in number: they could not be deceived themſelves; for the fact in queſtion they ſaw with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears. Nor is it credible, that ſo many of them would combine together with a view of deceiving others; the greater part being men who feared God, as appeared by the general tenor of their lives. Thus, in the caſe of *Jo. Haydon*. This thing was not contrived and executed in a corner, and in the preſence of his own family only, or three or four perſons prepared for the purpoſe. No: it was in an open ſtreet in the city of *Briſtol*, at one or two in the afternoon. And the doors being open from the beginning, not only many of the neighbours, from every ſide, but ſeveral others (indeed whoſoever deſired it) went in

till

till the houſe could contain no more. Nor yet does the account of my own illneſs and recovery *depend* as you ſuppoſe, on *my bare word*: There were many witneſſes, both of my diſorder, on *Friday* and *Saturday*, and my lying down moſt part of *Sunday*, (a thing they were well ſatisfied could not be the effect of a ſlight indiſpoſition) and all who ſaw me that evening, plainly diſcerned (what I could not wholly conceal) that I was in pain: about two hundred of whom were preſent, when I was ſeized with the cough, which cut me ſhort, ſo that I could ſpeak no more; till I cried aloud, "Lord, increaſe my faith: Lord, confirm the word of thy grace." The ſame perſons ſaw and heard, that at the inſtant I changed my poſture, and broke out into thankſgiving: that quickly after I ſtood upright, (which I could not before) and ſhewed no ſign either of ſickneſs or pain.

Yet I muſt deſire you well to obſerve, thirdly, that my will, or choice, or deſire, had no place either in this or any caſe of this kind, that has ever fallen under my notice. Five minutes before I had no thought of this. I expected nothing leſs. I was willing to wait for a gradual recovery in the ordinary uſe of outward means. I did not look for any other cure, till the moment before I found it. And it is my belief, that the caſe was alawys the ſame with regard to the moſt *real and undoubted miracles*. I believe God never interpoſed his miraculous

culous power but according to his own sovereign will: not according to the will of man: neither of him by whom he wrought, nor, of any other man whatsoever. The wisdom, as well as the power are his; nor can I find that ever, from the beginning of the world, he lodged this power in any mere man, to be used whenever that man saw good. Suppose therefore, there was a man now upon earth, who did work *real and undoubted miracles*; I would ask, by whose power doth he work these? And at whose pleasure? His own, or God's? Not his own; but God's. But if so, then your demand is made not on man, but on God. I cannot say it is modest, thus to challenge God; or well-suiting the relation of a creature to his Creator.

2. However, I cannot but think, there have been already so many interpositions of divine power, as will shortly leave you without excuse, if you either deny or despise them. We desire no favour; but the justice that diligent enquiry may be made concerning them. We are ready to name the persons on whom the power was shewn which belongeth to none but God; (not one or two, or ten or twelve only) to point out their places of abode: and we engage they shall answer every pertinent question fairly and directly; and, if required, shall give all their answers upon oath, before any who are impowered

to receive them. It is our particular requeſt, that the circumſtances which went before, which accompanied, and which followed after the facts under conſideration, may be thoroughly examined, and punctually noted down. Let but this be done (and is it not highly needful it ſhould? At leaſt by thoſe who would form an exact judgment?) and we have no fear, that any reaſonable man ſhould ſcruple to ſay, *This hath God wrought.*

As there have been already ſo many inſtances of this kind far beyond what we dared to aſk or think, I cannot take upon me to ſay, whether or no it will pleaſe God to add to their number. I have not herein *known the mind of the Lord*, neither am I *his counſellor*. He may, or he may not: I cannot affirm or deny. I have no light, and I have no deſire either way. *It is the Lord: let him do what ſeemeth him good.* I deſire only to be as clay in his hand.

3. "But what if there were now to be wrought ever ſo many *real and undoubted miracles?*" (I ſuppoſe you mean by *undoubted*, ſuch as being ſufficiently atteſted, *ought not* to be doubted of.) "Why, this, you ſay, *would put the controverſy on a ſhort foot, and be an effectual proof of the truth of your pretences.*" By no means. As common as this aſſertion is, there is none upon earth more falſe. Suppoſe a teacher was now, on this very day, to work *real* and *undoubted*

miracles, this would extremely little *ſhorten the controverſy* between him and the greateſt part of his oppoſers: for all this would not force them to believe; but many would ſtill ſtand juſt where they did before: ſeeing men may *harden their hearts* againſt miracles as well as againſt arguments.

So men have done from the beginning of the world, even againſt ſuch ſignal, glorious miracles, againſt ſuch interpoſitions of the power of God, as may not be again till the conſummation of all things. Permit me to remind you only of a few inſtances: and to obſerve, that the argument holds *a fortiori*; for who will ever be empowered of God again to work ſuch miracles as theſe were? Did *Pharaoh* look on all that *Moſes* and *Aaron* wrought as an *effectual proof of the truth of their pretences?* Even when the *Lord made the ſea to be dry land, and the waters were divided:* when the children of *Iſrael went into the midſt of the ſea*, and the waters *were a wall on the right and on the left?* Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Nay:

The wounded dragon rag'd in vain;
And fierce, the utmoſt plagues to brave,
Madly he dar'd the parting main,
And ſunk beneath the o'erwhelming wave.

Was all this an *effectual proof of the truth of their pretences*, to the *Iſraelites* themſelves? It was not: *they were* ſtill *diſobedient at the ſea, even at the*

the Red Sea? Was the giving them day by day *bread from heaven, an effectual proof* to those *two hundred and fifty of the princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown, who* said with *Dathan* and *Abiram, Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up. Numb.* xvi. 14. Nay, *when the ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up!* (ver. 32.) Neither was this an *effectual proof* to those who saw it with their eyes, and heard the cries of those who went down into the pit: but the very next day, they *murmured against* Moses, *and against* Aaron, *saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord,* (ver. 41.) Was not the case generally the same with regard to the prophets that followed? Several of whom *stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire,* and did many other mighty works: yet their own people received them not. Yet *they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword; they were destitute, afflicted, tormented!* Utterly contrary to the commonly received supposition, "That the working *real, undoubted miracles,* must bring all controversy to an end, and convince every gainsayer."

Let us come nearer yet. How stood the case between our Lord himself and his opposers? Did he not work *real and undoubted miracles?* And what was the effect? Still when *he came to his own, his own received him not.* Still *he was*

deſpiſed and rejected of men. Still it was a challenge not to be anſwered, *Have any of the rulers, or of the Phariſees, believed on him?* —— After this, how can you imagine, that whoever works miracles muſt convince all men of *the truth of his pretences?*

I would juſt remind you of only one inſtance more. *There ſat a certain man at Lyſtra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. The ſame heard Paul ſpeak; who ſtedfaſtly beholding him, and perceiving he had faith to be healed, ſaid with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.* — Here was ſo *undoubted a miracle*, that the people *lift up their voices, ſaying, The Gods are come down in the likeneſs of men.* But how long were even theſe convinced of *the truth of his pretences?* Only till *there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium*; and then they *ſtoned him* (as they ſuppoſed) to death! *Acts* xiv. 1, *&c.* So certain it is, that no miracles whatever, that were ever yet wrought in the world, were *effectual to prove* the moſt glaring truth to thoſe who hardened their hearts againſt it.

4. And it will equally hold in every age and nation. *If they hear not Moſes and the prophets, neither will they be* convinced (of what they deſire not to believe) *though one roſe from the dead.* Without a miracle, without one riſing from the dead, ἐαν τις θέλῃ ποιεῖν, *if any man be willing to do his*

his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. But if he is not *willing to do his will*, he will never want an excuse, a plausible reason for rejecting it: yea, though ever so many miracles were wrought to confirm it. For let *ever so much light come into the world*, it will have no effect (such is the wise and just will of God) on those who *love darkness rather than light.* It will not convince those who do not simply desire to do *the will of their Father which is in heaven.* Those *who mind earthly things*, who (if they do not continue in any gross outward sin, yet) love pleasure and ease; yet seek profit or power, preferment or reputation. Nothing will ever be an effectual proof to these, of the holy and acceptable will of God, unless first their proud hearts be humbled, their stubborn wills bowed down, and their desires brought, at least, in some degree, into obedience to the law of Christ.

Hence, although it should please God to work anew all the wonders that ever were wrought on earth, still these men, however *wise* and *prudent* they may be in things relating to the present world, would fight against God and all his messengers, and that in spite of these miracles. Mean while God will reveal his truth *unto babes*, unto those who are meek and lowly, whose desires are in heaven, who want to *know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified.*——These need

need no outward miracles to ſhew them his will: they have a plain rule, the written word. And *the anointing which they have received of him, abideth in them, and teacheth them all things,* (1 *John* ii. 27.) Through this they are enabled to bring all doctrines *to the law and the teſtimony.* And whatſoever is agreeable to this they receive, without waiting to ſee it atteſted by miracles. As, on the other hand, whatſoever is contrary to this they reject: nor can any miracles move them to receive it.

5. Yet I do not know, that God hath any where precluded himſelf from thus exerting his ſovereign power, from working miracles, in any kind or degree, in any age, to the end of the world. I do not recollect any ſcripture wherein we are taught that miracles were to be confined within the limits either of the *apoſtolic* or the *Cyprianic* age, or of any period of time, longer or ſhorter, even till the reſtitution of all things. I have not obſerved, either in the Old Teſtament or the New, any intimation at all of this kind. St. *Paul* indeed ſays once, concerning two of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit (ſo I think that text is uſually underſtood) *whether there be prophecies, they ſhall fail; whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe*; but he does not ſay, either that theſe or any other miracles ſhall ceaſe, till faith and hope ſhall ceaſe alſo; till they ſhall all be ſwallowed up in the viſion of God, and love be all in all.

I pre-

I presume you will allow, there is one kind of miracles (loosely speaking) which are not ceased: namely, τερατα ψευδους, *lying wonders*, diabolical miracles, wrought by the power of evil spirits. Nor can you easily conceive, that these will cease, as long as the *father of lies* is the *prince of this world.* And why should you think, that the God of truth is less active than him, or that he will not have his miracles also? Only not as man wills, neither when he wills; but according to his own excellent wisdom and goodness.

6. But even if it were supposed, that God does now work beyond the operation of merely natural causes, yet what impression would this make upon *you*, in the disposition of mind you are now in? Suppose the trial was repeated, and made again to-morrow. One informs you the next day, "While a clergyman was preaching yesterday, where I was, a man came who had been long ill of an incurable distemper. Prayer was made for him. And he was restored to perfect health."

Suppose now that this was a real fact, perhaps you would scarce have patience to hear the account of it; but would cut it short in the midst, with "Do you tell this as something *supernatural?* Then miracles are not ceased." But if you should venture to ask, Where was this? And who was the person who prayed? And it was answered, "At the *Foundery* near *Moorfields*;

the

the perſon who prayed was Mr. *Weſley*." What a damp comes at once! What a weight falls on your mind at the firſt ſetting out! 'Tis well if you have any heart or deſire to move one ſtep farther. Or if you ſhould, what a ſtrong additional propenſity do you now feel to deny the fact? And is there not a ready excuſe for ſo doing? "O! they who tell the ſtory are *his own people:* moſt of whom, we may be ſure, will *ſay* any thing for him, and the reſt will *believe* any thing."——But if you at length allowed the fact, might you not find means to account for it by *natural* cauſes? "Great crowds, violent heats, with obſtructions and irregularities of the blood and ſpirits," will do wonders.—If you could not but allow it was more than *natural*, might not ſome plauſible reaſon be found, for ranking it among the *lying wonders*, for aſcribing it to the devil rather than God? And if, after all, you was convinced it was the finger of God, muſt you not ſtill bring every doctrine advanced *to the law and the teſtimony*, the only ſure and infallible teſt of all? — What then is the uſe of this continual demand, "*Shew us a ſign, and we will believe?*" What will you believe? I hope no more than is written in the book of God. And thus far you might venture to believe, even without a miracle.

7. Let us conſider this point a little farther. What is it you would have us prove by miracles?

cles? The doctrines we preach?" We prove these by scripture and reason; and if need be, by antiquity. What else is it then we are to prove by miracles? At length we have a distinct reply. "Wise and sober men will not otherwise be convinced (*i. e.* unless you prove it by miracles) that God is, by the means of such teachers and such doctrines, working a great and extraordinary work in the earth."

So then the determinate point which you, in their name, call upon us to prove by miracles, is this: "*That God is by these teachers, working a great and extraordinary work in the earth.*"

What I mean by a *great* and *extraordinary work*, is the bringing *multitudes* of *gross*, *notorious sinners*, in a *short* space, to the *fear* and *love* and *service* of God, to an *entire change* of *heart and life.*

Now, then, let us take a nearer view of the proposition, and see which part of it we are to prove by miracles.

Is it, 1. That A. B. was for many years without God in the world, a common swearer, a drunkard, or sabbath-breaker?

Or, 2. That he is not so now?

Or, 3. That he continued so till he heard this man preach, and from that time was another man?

Not so. The proper way to prove these facts, is by the testimony of competent witnesses. And

these

these witnesses are ready, whenever required, to give full evidence of them.

Or, Would you have us prove by miracles,

4. That this was not done by our own power or holiness?

That God only is able to raise the dead, to quicken those who are dead in trespasses and sins?

Where then is the *wisdom* of those men who demand miracles in proof of such a proposition? One branch of which, "That such sinners are reformed by means of these teachers," being a plain fact, can only be proved by testimony, as all other facts are; and the other, "That this is *a work of God, and a more than ordinary work*," needs no proof, as carrying its own evidence to every thinking man.

8. To sum up this. No truly *wise* or *sober* man can possibly desire or expect miracles, to prove, either. 1. That these *doctrines* are true: this must be decided by scripture and reason; or 2. That these *facts* are true: this can only be proved by testimony: or 3. That to *change* sinners from darkness to light, is the *work of God* alone; only using what instruments he pleases: this is glaringly self-evident: or, 4. That *such a change* wrought in *so many notorious* sinners, within so *short* a time is a *great* and *extraordinary* work of God. What then is it remains to be proved by miracles? Perhaps you will say, it is this, "That God has *called*, or *sent* you to do this."

Nay,

Nay, this is implied in the 3d of the foregoing propoſitions. If God has actually *uſed* us therein, if *his work* hath in fact proſpered in our hands, then he hath *called* or *ſent* us to do this. I intreat reaſonable men to weigh this thoroughly, whether the *fact* does not plainly prove the *call*? Whether he who thus *enables* us to ſave ſouls alive, does not *commiſſion* us ſo to do? Whether by giving us the *power* to pluck theſe brands out of the burning, he does not *authoriſe* us to exert it? O that it were poſſible for you to conſider calmly, whether the *ſucceſs* of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, even as it is preached by us, the leaſt of his ſervants, be not itſelf a *miracle*, never to be forgotten! One which cannot be denied, as being viſible at this day, not in one, but an hundred places: one which cannot be accounted for by the *ordinary* courſe of any *natural cauſes* whatſoever: one which cannot be aſcribed, with any colour of reaſon, to diabolical agency: and laſtly, one which will bear the infallible teſt, the trial of the written word†.

But " why do you talk of the *ſucceſs of the goſpel* in *England*, which was a *Chriſtian* country before you was born?" Was it indeed? Is it ſo at this day? I would explain myſelf a little on this head alſo.

And 1. None can deny that the people of *England*, in general, are *called* Chriſtians. They are

† Second letter to Dr. *Church*, p. 55, *& ſeq.*

are *called* ſo, a few only excepted, by others, as well as by themſelves. But I preſume no man will ſay the *name* makes the thing; that men *are* Chriſtians, barely becauſe they are *called* ſo. It muſt be allowed, 2. That the people of *England*, generally ſpeaking, have been *chriſtened*, or baptized: but neither can we infer, "Theſe were *once* baptized; therefore they are *Chriſtians* now." It is 3. allowed, That many of thoſe who were once *baptized*, and are *called Chriſtians* to this day, *hear* the word of God, attend *public prayers*, and partake of the *Lord's ſupper*. But neither does this prove, that they *are Chriſtians*. For notwithſtanding this, ſome of them live in open ſin: and others (though not conſcious to themſelves of *hypocriſy*, yet) are utter ſtrangers to the *religion of the heart*; are full of pride, vanity, covetouſneſs, ambition; of hatred, anger, malice or envy; and conſequently, are no more *ſpiritual Chriſtians* than the open drunkard, or common ſwearer.

Now theſe being removed, where are the *Chriſtians*, from whom we may properly term *England* a *Chriſtian country?* The men who have *the mind which was in Chriſt*, and who *walk as he alſo walked?* Whoſe inmoſt ſoul is renewed after the image of God; and who are outwardly holy, as he who hath called them is holy? There are doubtleſs a few ſuch to be found. To deny this, would be "*want of candor.*" But how few? How thinly ſcattered up and down? And as for a *Chriſtian*

a *Chriſtian viſible church*, or a body of Chriſtians, viſibly united together, where is this to be ſeen?

Ye different ſects, who all declare,
Lo! here is Chriſt, or Chriſt is there,
Your ſtronger proofs *divinely* give,
And *ſhew* me where the *Chriſtians live!*

And what uſe is it of, what good end does it ſerve, to term *England a Chriſtian country?* Although, it is true, moſt of the natives are *called* Chriſtians, have been *baptized*, frequent the *ordinances:* and although here and there, a real Chriſtian is to be found, *as a light ſhining in a dark place.* Does it do any honour to our great Maſter, among thoſe who are not *called* by his name? Does it recommend Chriſtianity to the *Jews*, the *Mahometans*, or the avowed *Heathens?* Surely no one can conceive it does. It only makes *Chriſtianity* ſtink in their noſtrils. Does it anſwer any *good end*, with regard to thoſe who are called by this worthy name? I fear not; but rather, an exceeding bad one. For does it not keep multitudes eaſy in their *Heathen practice?* Does it not make or keep, ſtill greater numbers, ſatisfied with their *Heathen tempers?* Does it not directly tend to make both the one and the other imagine, that they *are* what indeed they *are not?* That they *are Chriſtians*, while they are utterly without Chriſt, and without God in the world?

—To

—To close this point. If men are not *Christians*, till they are renewed after the image of Christ, and if the *people of England*, in general, are not thus renewed, why do we term them so? *The God of this world hath* long *blinded their hearts*. Let us do nothing to increase that blindness: but rather to recover them from that *strong delusion*, that they may no longer *believe a lie*.

Let us labour to convince all mankind, that to be a *real Christian* is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength; to love our neighbour as ourselves, and therefore to do unto every man, as we would he should do unto us †.

To change one of these Heathens into a real Christian, and to continue him such, all the *ordinary operations* of the Holy Spirit are absolutely necessary.

"But what are they?" I sum them up (as I did in the *Farther Appeal to men of reason and religion*) in the words of as learned and orthodox a divine as ever *England* bred.

"Sanctification being opposed to our corruption, and answering fully to the latitude thereof, whatsoever holiness and perfection is wanting in our nature, must be supplied by the Spirit of God. Wherefore, we being by nature totally void of all saving truth, and under an impossibility of knowing the will of God; this *spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things*

† Second letter to Dr. *Church*, p. 67, *& seq.*

things of God, and *revealeth* them unto the ſons of men; ſo that thereby the darkneſs of their underſtanding is expelled and they are enlightened with the knowledge of God. The ſame ſpirit which *revealeth* the object of faith, generally, to the univerſal church, doth alſo *illuminate the underſtanding* of ſuch as believe; that they may receive the truth. For *faith is the gift of God*, not only in the object, but alſo in the act. And this gift, is a gift of the Holy Ghoſt working within us.——And as the increaſe of perfection, ſo the original of faith is from the Spirit of God, by internal illumination of the ſoul."

"The ſecond part of the office of the Holy Ghoſt, is the renewing of man, in all the parts and faculties of his ſoul. For our natural corruption conſiſting in an averſation of our wills, and a depravation of our affections; an inclination of them to the will of God, is wrought within us by the Spirit of God."

"The third part of his office is, to lead, direct, and govern us, in our actions and converſations. *If we live in the ſpirit*, quickened by his renovation, we muſt alſo *walk in the ſpirit*, following his direction, led by his manuduction. We are alſo animated and acted by the Spirit of God, who giveth *both to will and to do*."

"And † *as many as are* thus *led by the Spirit of* God, *are the ſons of* God. Moreover, that this direction may prove more effectual, we are guided

† Rom. viii. 14.

ed in our prayers by the ſame ſpirit: according to the promiſe, *I will pour upon the houſe of* David *and upon the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication,* (Zech. xii. 10.) Whereas then, *this is the confidence we have in him, that if we aſk any thing according to his will he heareth* us: and whereas *we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought,* ‡ *the Spirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groaning that cannot be uttered.*§ *And he that ſearcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, becauſe he maketh interceſſion for the ſaints according to the will of* God. From which interceſſion (made for all true Chriſtians) "he hath the ‖ name of the *paraclete* given him by Chriſt; who ſaid, *I will pray the Father, and he will give you another paraclete.* For, *if any man ſin we have a paraclete with the Father,* Jeſus Chriſt *the righteous,* ſaith *St. John: who maketh interceſſion for us,* ſaith *St. Paul,* (Rom. viii. 34.) And we have ¶ *another paraclete,* ſaith our Saviour, † *which alſo maketh interceſſion for us,* ſaith *St. Paul.* A *paraclete* then, in the notion of the ſcriptures, is an interceſſor."

"It is alſo the office of the Holy Ghoſt to *aſſure us of the adoption of ſons,* to create in us a ſenſe of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earneſt of our everlaſting inheritance. *The love of* God *is ſhed abroad in our hearts,*

‡ Ver. 26. § Ver. 27. ‖ John xiv. 16. 26. ¶ John xiv. 16. Rom. viii. 27. † Ver. 15, 16.

hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us. For *as many as are led by the Spirit of* God, *they are the ſons of* God. *And becauſe we are ſons,* God *hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. For we have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: the Spirit itſelf bearing witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of* God. As therefore we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, ſo we are alſo by the ſame Spirit *aſſured of our adoption.* Becauſe being *ſons, we are alſo heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt,* by the ſame Spirit we have the *pledge,* or rather the *earneſt of our inheritance. For he which eſtabliſheth us in Chriſt, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath alſo ſealed us, and hath given us the earneſt of his Spirit in our hearts;* ſo that *we are ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance.* The Spirit of God, as given to us in this life, is to be looked upon as an earneſt, being part of that reward which is promiſed, and, upon performance of the covenant which God hath made with us, certainly to be received."

It now reſts with your lordſhip to take your choice; either to condemn, or acquit both: either your lordſhip muſt condemn biſhop *Pearſon* for an *enthuſiaſt,* or you muſt acquit me: for I have his expreſs authority on my ſide, concern-

ing every text, which I affirm to belong to all Chriſtians.

But I have greater authority than his, and ſuch as I reverence, only leſs than the oracles of God. I mean that of our own church. I ſhall cloſe this head, by ſetting down what occurs in her authentic records, concerning either our *receiving the Holy Ghoſt*, or his *ordinary operations* in all true Chriſtians.

In her daily ſervice ſhe teacheth us all to *beſeech* God *to grant us his Holy Spirit, that thoſe things may pleaſe him which we do at this preſent, and that the reſt of our life may be pure and holy:* to pray for our *ſovereign Lord the King*, that God would *repleniſh him with the grace of his Holy Spirit*; for all the royal family, that *they may be endued with his Holy Spirit, and enriched with his heavenly grace*; for all the clergy and people, that he would *ſend down upon them the helpful Spirit of his grace*; for the *catholic church*, that *it may be guided and governed by his good Spirit*; and for all therein, who, at any time, *make* their *common ſupplications unto* him, that the *fellowſhip* or communication *of the Holy Ghoſt may be with them all evermore.*

Her collects are full of petitions to the ſame effect. "† Grant that we may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit.——‡ Grant that in all our ſufferings here, for the teſtimony of thy truth, we may by faith behold the glory that ſhall be revealed,

† Collect for Chriſtmas-Day. ‡ St. Stephen's Day.

revealed, and *being filled with the Holy Ghoſt*, may love and bleſs our perſecutors. § Send thy Holy Ghoſt, and pour into our hearts that moſt excellent gift of charity. † O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us thy humble ſervants, that by *thy holy inſpiration*, we may think thoſe things that are good, and by thy merciful guidance may perform the ſame. ‡ We beſeech thee, leave us not comfortleſs, but ſend to us the Holy Ghoſt to comfort us. || Grant us by the ſame Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort. §§ Grant us, Lord, we beſeech thee, the Spirit to think and do always ſuch things as be rightful. ¶ O God, foraſmuch as without thee we are not able to pleaſe thee, mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts. †† Cleanſe the thoughts of our hearts by *the inſpiration of thy Holy Spirit*, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name.

" Give they Holy Spirit to this infant (or this perſon) that he may be born again.—— Give thy holy Spirit to theſe perſons (N. B. already baptized) that they may continue thy ſervants."

" Almighty God, who haſt vouchſafed to

 regenerate

§ Quidquageſima Sunday. † Fifth Sunday after Eaſter. ‡ Sunday after Aſcenſion-day. || Whitſunday. §§ Ninth Sunday after Trinity. ¶ Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity †† Communion Office.

regenerate these persons by water and the Holy Ghost——strengthen them with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them the manifold gifts of thy grace." *Office of Confirmation.*

From these passages it may sufficiently appear for what purposes, every Christian, according to the doctrine of the church of *England* does now *receive the Holy Ghost.* But this will be still more clear from those that follow; wherein we may likewise observe, a plain, rational sense of God's *revealing* himself to us, of the *inspiration* of the Holy Ghost, and of a believer's *feeling* in himself the *mighty working* of the Spirit of Christ.

" God gave them of old, grace to be his children, as he doth us now. But now by the coming of our Savour Christ, *we have received* more abundantly *the Spirit of God* in our hearts." *Hom. on faith.* Part 2.

" He died to destroy the rule of the devil in in us and he rose again to send down his Holy Spirit to *rule in our hearts.*" *Hom. on the resurrection.*

" We have the Holy Spirit in our hearts, as a *seal and pledge* of our everlasting inheritance." *Ibid.*

" The Holy Ghost sat upon each of them, like as it had been cloven tongues of fire, to teach, that it is he that *giveth eloquence and utterance* in preaching the gospel, which engendereth a burning

a burning *zeal* towards God's word, and giveth all men *a tongue*, yea, a fiery tongue. (N. B. What ever occurs, in any of the journals, of God's "giving me utterance," or "enabling me to ſpeak *with power*," cannot therefore be quoted as *enthuſiaſm*, without wounding the church thro' my ſide.) "So that if any man be a dumb Chriſtian not profeſſing his faith openly, he giveth men occaſion to doubt, leſt he have not the grace of the Holy Ghoſt within him. *Hom. on Whitſunday.* Part I.

"It is the office of the Holy Ghoſt to ſanctify; which, the more it is hid from our underſtanding, "(i. e. the particular manner of his working) "the more it ought to move all men to wonder at the ſecret and mighty workings of God's Holy Spirit, which is within us. For it is the Holy Ghoſt that doth *quicken* the minds of men, *ſtirring up* godly motions in their hearts. Neither does he think it ſufficient inwardly to work the new birth of men, unleſs he does alſo dwell and abide in them. *Know ye not,* ſaith St. *Paul, that ye are the temples of* God, *and that his Spirit dwelleth in you? Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghoſt, which is within you?* Again he ſaith, *Ye are not in the fleſh, but in the ſpirit.* For why? *The Spirit of* God *dwelleth in you.* To this agreeth St. *John*†, *The anointing which ye have received,* (he meaneth the Holy Ghoſt) *abideth in you.* And St.

† 1 John ii. 27.

Peter saith the same; *The Spirit of Glory and of* God *resteth upon you.* O what comfort is this to the heart of a true Christian, to think that the Holy Ghost dwelleth in him! *If* God *be with us* as the apostle saith, *who can be against us?* He giveth patience and joyfulness of heart in temptation and affliction, and is therefore worthily called † the *Comforter.* He doth instruct the hearts of the simple in the knowledge of God, and his word; therefore he is justly termed ‡ *the Spirit of truth.* And, N. B. where the Holy Ghost doth instruct, and teach, there is no delay at all in learning." *Ibid.*

[From this passage, I learn, 1. That every true Christian now *receives the Holy Ghost*, as the *Paraclete* or *Comforter* promised by our Lord, *John*, xiv. 13. Secondly, That every Christian receives him, as *the Spirit of truth*, (promised *John* xvi.) to *teach him all things.* And, 3. That *the anointing*, mentioned in the first epistle of St. *John abides in every Christian.*]

" In reading of God's word, he profiteth most, who is most *inspired* with the Holy Ghost." *Hom. on reading the Scripture.* Part. I.

" Human and worldly wisdom *is not needful* to the understanding the scripture; but the *revelation of the Holy Ghost*, who *inspireth* the true meaning unto them, who with humility, and diligence, search for it." *Ibid.* Part II.

" Make

† John xiv. 16. ‡ John xvi. 13.

" Make him know and *feel*, that there is no other name given under heaven, unto men, whereby we can be faved."

" If we *feel* our conſcience at peace with God, through remiſſion of our ſins—all is of God." *Hom. on Rogation week.* Part III.

" If you *feel* ſuch a faith in you, rejoice in it, and let it be daily increaſing by well working." *Hom. on faith.* Part III.

" The faithful may *feel* wrought, tranquillity of conſcience, the increaſe of faith and hope, with many other graces of God." *Hom. on the ſacrament.* Part. I.

" Godly men *feel* inwardly God's Holy Spirit inflaming their hearts with love." *Hom. on certain places of ſcripture.* Part I.

" God give us grace to know theſe things, and *feel* them in our hearts! This knowledge and *feeling* is not of ourſelves. Let us therefore meekly call upon the bountiful Spirit, the Holy Ghoſt, to *inſpire* us with his preſence, that we may be able to hear the goodneſs of God, to our ſalvation. For without his lively inſpiration, we cannot ſo much as ſpeak the name of the Mediator. *No man can ſay, Jeſus* is the Lord, *but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Much leſs ſhould we be able to believe and know theſe great myſteries that be opened to us by Chriſt. *But we have received,* ſaith St. *Paul, not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God:* for this purpoſe, *that we may know the things which are freely given to us of* God.

God. In the power of the Holy Ghoſt reſteth all ability to *know* God, and to *pleaſe* him. It is he that *purifieth* the mind by his ſecret working. He *enlighteneth* the heart to conceive worthy thoughts of Almighty God. He ſitteth on the *tongue* of man, to ſtir him to ſpeak his honour. He only miniſtereth ſpiritual *ſtrength* to the powers of the *ſoul* and *body*. And if we have any gift whereby we may profit our neighbour, all is wrought by this one and ſelf-ſame Spirit." *Hom. for Rogation-week*, Part III.

Every propoſition which I have any where advanced concerning thoſe *operations* of the Holy Ghoſt, which I believe are *common* to all Chriſtians in all ages, is here clearly maintained by our own church.

Being fully convinced of this, I could not well underſtand, for many years, how it was, that on the mentioning any of theſe great truths, even among men of education, the cry immediately aroſe, "An enthuſiaſt, an enthuſiaſt." But I now plainly perceive, this is only an old fallacy in a new ſhape. To object *enthuſiaſm* to any perſon or doctrine, is but a decent method of begging the queſtion. It generally ſpares the objector the trouble of reaſoning, and is a ſhorter and eaſier way of carrying his cauſe.

For inſtance: I aſſert, that "till a man *receives the Holy Ghoſt*, he is without God in the world; that he cannot know the things of God, unleſs God *reveal* them unto him by his Spirit; no,

nor

nor have even one holy or heavenly temper, without the *inſpiration* of the Holy One." Now ſhould one who is conſcious to himſelf, that he has experienced none of theſe things, attempt to confute theſe propoſitions either from ſcripture or antiquity, it might prove a difficult taſk. What then ſhall he do? Why, cry out, "*Enthuſiaſm! Fanaticiſm!*" and the work is done.

"But is it not mere *enthuſiaſm* or *fanaticiſm* to talk of the *New Birth?*" So one might imagine from the *manner* in which your Lordſhip talks of it. "The Spirit did not ſtop till it had manifeſted itſelf in the laſt effort of its power, the *New Birth* †. The *New Birth* began in ſtorms and tempeſts, in cries and extacies, in tumults and confuſions ‡. Perſons who had no ſenſe of religion, that is, no extatic feelings, or pains of the *New Birth* §. What can be the iſſue of the *New Birth*, attended with thoſe infernal throes ‖? Why ſhould he elicit ſenſe from theſe Gentiles, when they were finally to be deprived of it in extacies and *New Births* ¶? All theſe circumſtances Mr. *W.* has declared to be *conſtant ſymptoms* of the *New Birth* ††."

So the *New Birth* is, throughout the whole tract, the ſtanding topic of *ridicule!*

"No, not the *New Birth* itſelf, but your enthuſiaſtic, ridiculous *account* of it." What is then

† p. 123. ‡ p. 126. § p. 180. ‖ p. 170.
¶ p. 225. †† p. 222.

then my *account* of the New Birth? I gave it some years ago in these words:

'It is that great change which God works in the soul, when he brings it into life: when he raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the almighty Spirit of God, when he is *created anew in Christ Jesus*, when it is *renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness:* when the love of the world is changed into the love of God, pride into humility, passion into meekness; hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love to all mankind. In a word, it is that change whereby the *earthly, sensual, devilish mind*, is turned into *the mind which was in Christ Jesus*.' (Vol. IV. of *Sermons*.)

This is *my account* of the New Birth. What is there *ridiculous* or *enthusiastic* in it?

"But what do you mean by those *tempests*, and *cries*, and *pains*, and infernal *throes* attending the New Birth?" I will tell you as plainly as I can, in the very same words I used to Dr. Church, (after premising, that some experience much, some very little of these *pains* and *throes*.)

When men feel in themselves the heavy burthen of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart, and cannot but accuse themselves, and open their grief

grief unto Almighty God, and call unto him for mercy. This being done ſeriouſly, their mind is ſo occupied, partly with ſorrow and heavineſs, partly with an earneſt deſire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all deſire of meat and drink is laid apart, and loathing of all worldly things and pleaſures comes in place, ſo that nothing then liketh them more than to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behaviour of body, to ſhew themſelves weary of life.

Now permit me to aſk, What if before you had obſerved, that theſe were the very words of our own church, one of your acquaintance or pariſhioners had come and told you, that ever ſince he heard a ſermon at the *Foundery*, he *ſaw damnation* before him, *and beheld with the eye of his mind the horror of hell?* What if he had *trembled and quaked*, and been ſo taken up, *partly with ſorrow and heavineſs, partly with an earneſt deſire to be delivered from the danger of hell and damnation*, as to *weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behaviour, to ſhew himſelf weary of life?* Would you have ſcrupled to ſay, "Here is another *deplorable inſtance of the Methodiſts driving men to diſtraction.* †?"

I have now finiſhed, as my time permits, what I had to ſay, either concerning myſelf, or on the operations of the Holy Spirit. In doing this, I have uſed great plainneſs of ſpeech, and yet

† Second Letter to Dr. *Church.*

yet I hope, without rudeneſs. If any thing of that kind has ſlipt from me, I am ready to retract it. I deſire, on the one hand, to *accept no man's perſon*; and yet, on the other, to give *honour to whom honour is due.*

If your lordſhip ſhould think it worth your while to ſpend any more words upon me, may I preſume to requeſt one thing of your lordſhip, to be more *ſerious?* It cannot injure your lordſhip's character, or your cauſe. Truth is great, and will prevail.

Wiſhing your Lordſhip all temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings, I am,

My Lord,

Nov. 26, 1762. *Your Lordſhip's dutiful Son and Servant,*

JOHN WESLEY.

End of the *Eighteenth* Volume.

THE

CONTENTS

Of the *Eighteenth* Volume.

Page

A brief account of the trial at Gloceſter. — 3
Modern Chriſtianity; *exemplified at* Wedneſbury, *and other adjacent places in* Staffordſhire. — — — — 16
The caſe of John Nelſon. — — 52
A letter to the Rev. Mr. Baily, *of* Corke. 99
A letter to the Rev. Dr. Conyers Middleton, *occaſioned by his Free Enquiry.* — 140
A letter to the Right Rev. the Lord Biſhop of Gloceſter: *occaſioned by his tract on the office and operations of the Holy Spirit.* 276

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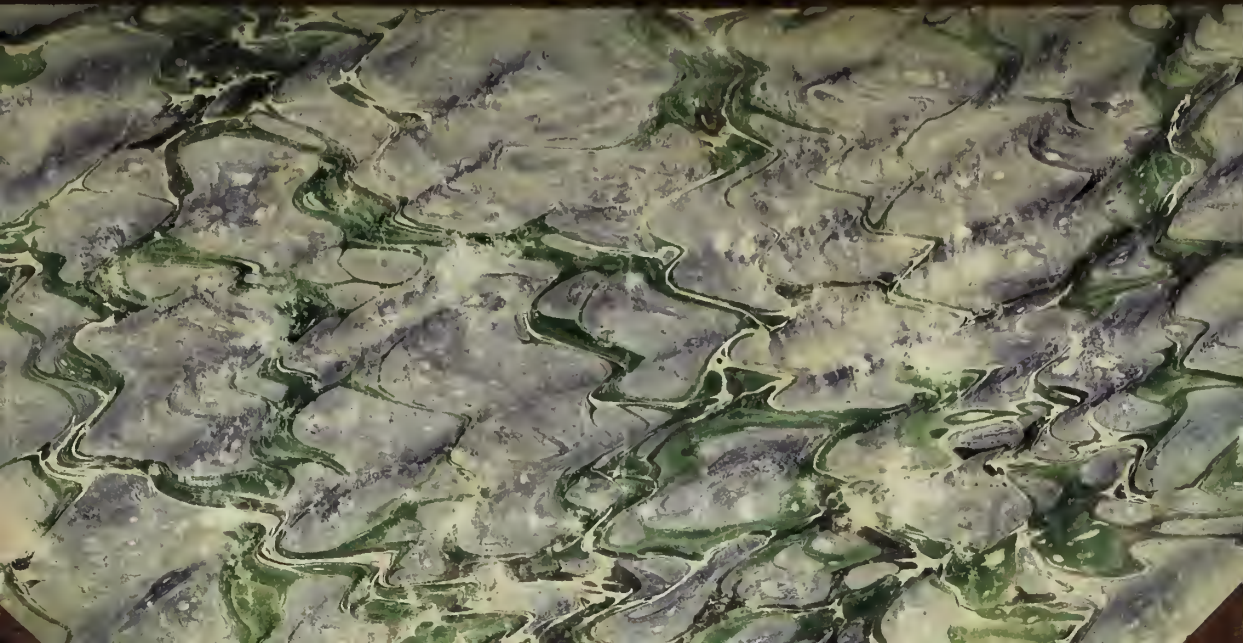
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